

The  
LIFE  
ECSTATIC

JAMES MUDGE



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*The*  
***Life Ecstatic***

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*by*

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"The Saintly Calling," "Honey from Many Hives,"  
Etc., Etc.



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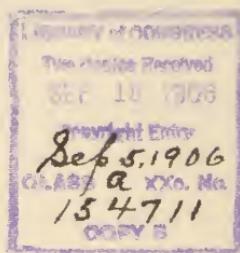
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## Foreword

IS it not a shame, and a thousand pities, that so few of God's children are habitually jubilant? Not many have the "solar light" on their faces. Not many seem to understand that ample provision has been made whereby they may continually rejoice. Hence this book; to assert the fact, and explain the method. He who reads it carefully, and steadily practises what it contains, will possess the life ecstatic.

JAMES MUDGE.

Jamaica Plain, Mass.



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THE LIFE ECSTATIC

## ALL FOR THE BEST.

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O Lord, how happy should we be  
If we could cast our care on Thee;  
    If we from self could rest,  
And feel at heart that One above  
In perfect wisdom, perfect love,  
    Is working for the best.

Could we but kneel and cast our load  
E'en while we pray, upon our God  
    Then rise with lightened cheer;  
Sure that the Father, who is nigh  
To still the famished raven's cry,  
    Will hear in that we fear.

Lord, make these faithless hearts of ours  
Such lessons learn from birds and flowers,  
    Make them from self to cease;  
Leave all things to a Father's will  
And find, before Him, lying still,  
    E'en in affliction peace.

*Sir John Bouring.*

## THE LIFE ECSTATIC.

We mean by this phrase to indicate the condition of the man who has given himself absolutely into God's keeping, and has received in return all that God stands ever ready to bestow upon his best beloved children. Is ecstasy a term too strong to describe it? It will not be so adjudged, we believe, by those who have experienced the emotion and known the state. The word has not yet been honored by a place in the vocabulary of our English Bible; neither has enthusiasm, rapture, ardor, and many another burning bush through which God flames. But now that "radiant" and "exult" have been brought in by the Old Testament Revisers, out of the Hebrew, we may hope that "ecstasy" will some day get admission from the Greek; for there are words in the New Testament that might well be so rendered without at all overstepping the bounds of the intense fulness of delight with which they are surcharged. When we are told to be "exceeding glad," and to "leap for joy," and to be "glad with exceeding joy,"

it is evident that something very like ecstasy is meant. It points to an overpowering emotion, the being carried quite out of one's normal self in a really rapturous, passionate way, to a transportation and exaltation that is entirely up to the measure of ecstatic.

It will have to be admitted, of course, that the ordinary Christian life does not call for any such adjective to describe it. That life, alas, is a very tame, cool, humdrum affair, scarcely to be distinguished from that which has no Christian label whatever, and sometimes even inferior to that which is the fruit of the highest moral philosophy. We all know that the average Christian does not particularly honor his Lord, or exhibit with any sort of adequacy the glory of the great salvation; and that the Church will never conquer the world or impress itself as it should upon society until a very different state of things prevails. We all know, also, or ought to know, that abundant provision has been made for another order of affairs altogether, for continuous triumph instead of frequent defeat, strength instead of weakness, success instead of failure, happiness instead of humiliation and sorrow.

What does the Book say? "God is able to make all grace abound unto you, that ye having always all-sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work"; "able to guard you from

stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." "Jesus is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." "Sin shall not have dominion over you." "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus." "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." "I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth." "I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation." "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." "The truth shall make you free." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." "My God shall supply every need of yours, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." "My grace is sufficient for thee." "All things are possible to him that believeth." "The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto

the perfect day." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "Your joy no man taketh from you." And many more such words there are, describing the privileges of the believer. These are but a very small part, the merest handful, of what might easily be cited from holy writ. They come to us in promise and precept and prayer, in the declaration of purpose, the statement of experience, and the commandment of authority. They are a constant rebuke to our listlessness and lukewarmness, a perpetual incentive to the attainment of far better things.

That such attainment is feasible and every way desirable, a multitude of witnesses testify. It is not to be believed that God would command it were it out of our reach. The reason why so few comparatively have mounted to these heights must be looked for in lack of appreciation and lack of resolution. Nothing great is gained without effort. The prize of wealth is not for him who is unwilling to bend his energies tirelessly to the task. Deep learning and the mastery of noble truth will not come to the scholar who is easily turned aside by difficulties. The star of fame rarely, if ever, rests upon the brow of him who refuses to toil. The laws of human progress and achievement are the same in spiritual as in temporal things. We do not get something for nothing in one more than in the other. Although

grace is free, it is wrong to infer that we need, therefore, pay nothing to maintain the institutions of the gospel; and equally wrong to conclude that the lazy man will rise as high in holiness as the energetic. God's bounty is without money, but every promise has its condition, and only they who heartily co-operate with God can receive His blessing. He will do all He can for every one, but He can do little or nothing for the indolent, the negligent, the unresponsive. We have the matter, therefore, in our own hands. An intelligent application of means to end is as much called for in religion as in business. And it is because such application is so seldom seen that the Lord uttered that biting rebuke to His disciples, "The sons of this world are in their generation wiser than the sons of light." The same shrewd planning and vigorous executing which mammon worshipers rely upon for success has legitimate place in the case of Christ worshipers, and the fact that it is rarely found sufficiently accounts for the poor results that are so common.

What are the paths to the life ecstatic, what are its conditions? It cannot be said that, strictly speaking, there is any secret about it, although that word is frequently used in such connections. They have been often set forth. They may be phrased in many ways. They are not mysteries,

or things hidden from the gaze of any who will take proper pains to make their acquaintance. That they appear to be known only to a few is inferred, not unnaturally, from the fact that so few act as if they knew them. When an immense treasure is at the disposal of those who have the password which admits to the chamber where it is stored, and only a dozen go in, it is fair to suppose that the rest are without the password. Such reasoning would certainly seem sound to one accustomed to dealing with men who are mad after money, and who are unable to see any cause why the particular pile of money in the secret chamber is not as desirable as any other. Are the cases parallel? The spiritual treasure is not only as real as the temporal, but far more important, more permanent, more deeply satisfying. The conditions of access to it, we may confess, are not altogether easy—how could they be without contradicting all analogy, and depreciating its proper worth? But we are unwilling to admit that they are wholly beyond the reach of any. The password is available for all such as really want it. That almost all choose to go without the treasure must be set down as one of the inexplicable puzzles which pertain to the whole process and prevalence of sin, that sin which blinds the eyes and stops the ears and hardens the

heart against all the divine calls so that they are not apprehended or understood.

Who, then, can be saved in this large, full, glorious sense of which we speak? All who set themselves about it in downright dead earnest, with the motto, "This one thing I do." All who are willing to make other matters secondary, putting this first. All who by much meditation and careful investigation reach the deliberate conclusion that this is worth while no matter what the cost. All who, after studying the subject in the light of every available means of information, and studying also their own particular position formulate a plan of campaign adapted to produce the desired result, and then systematically, indefatigably put it into execution.

Does this statement seem to limit the number to those very exceptionally constituted? If it does, this may also be said: each human being, however low in mentality or spirituality, can become better than he is, and that first step upward will open the way to another step so that if he presses on the most marvelous things can eventually be grasped. And if we are far below the top and must move slower than some more favorably circumstanced, that is no excuse for our not moving at all. Our progress will surely be expedited the further on we go. It is the nature of things: that is, it is the wisdom and power and love of

God, that makes these differences in human quality and capacity. To lodge complaints against the arrangement will do us no good. The better way is to determine that we will evolve to the utmost whatever capacities are in us, patient with ourselves and with the Almighty, not envying those that may be ahead of us, nor despising those behind, but doing our best, with the means at our disposal, to fulfill the special will divine that touches us.

The ecstatic life is, like all other things below the level of the infinite or the absolutely perfect, a matter of degrees. The very name, of course, implies a high degree of joy, but it may be more or less high. So far as it is a joy of the feelings it must be susceptible of considerable changes from time to time as circumstances alter. But the joy of the will need not thus be subject to fluctuation. This is the deeper joy, that which abides as well as abounds. This joy is independent of conditions, and is based on God alone, with whom there is no change. It will be high, unalterably so, in proportion as faith with unfaltering firmness takes hold on God, and the channels of the whole being are freely open to the unobstructed incoming of the heavenly influences. Where no doubt whatever, not the slightest incipient shadow of question, as to the Father's goodness and power is admitted, even into the

outskirts of the mind, there can be no gloom or fear or care. And if the will has set itself, once for all, like a rock, against such admission, and by constant watchfulness maintains this attitude, in vain will the tides of human circumstance and appearance dash themselves upon the barrier thus reared. A prompt and sufficient reply to every such suggestion will be ready, temptation will have no ground in which it can root itself, a perfect antidote to sorrow stands prepared whenever that poison threatens to gain a lodgment. As faith increases, then, in the processes of perpetual Christian growth, this joy which is linked with it must also increase. The degree of one will determine the degree of the other. The faith of the neophyte is feeble, vacillating, spasmodic; it slips when much pressure is applied; hence his joy is a very variable quantity. The faith of the saint, thoroughly instructed, long habituated, grounded in reason, reflection, revelation, and experience, is so strong that nothing can relax its hold; hence his joy takes on a tone to which the words exultation and jubilation are fully applicable. There is an effervescence and exuberance about it that brings forth hosannas and hallelujahs. The doxology rises continually to the lips; songs of praise come gushing up; shouts cannot be altogether repressed; the cup of bless-

ing runs over, and all that are around share in its benediction.

The life ecstatic can be but faintly described. Its charming hilarity and winsome buoyancy, its gaiety and glee, cannot be put into words. It must be experienced to be fully known. It is a blessed reality to some. Why should not more have it? Its consistent exhibition will do more than anything else to commend religion to the world. For it is a very sad and heavily burdened world, seeking painfully to be merry in ways that miscarry. "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot," says the apostle, "but be filled with the Spirit." The collocation is exceedingly suggestive. That elation and exhilaration which the wine-bibber seeks through the channel of his stomach, and whose reaction plunges him deeper into dolefulness, may be truly and healthfully secured by the fulness of the Spirit of God, which supplies an enlivenment that does not disappoint. And the apostle goes on in the same connection (Eph. V. 18-20) to note, as the result of this infilling, that "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" will be melodiously sung with both heart and voice, while the recipients are "giving thanks always for all things." Such thankfulness, which excepts nothing, small or great, hard or easy, painful or pleasant, from the bright, broad scope of its inclusion, and which St. Paul

clearly holds before us as our privilege and duty, is an essential part of the life ecstatic, and when completely compassed carries with it the possession of that life. In the pages that follow we hope to make plain many other points concerning it, and to help our readers to its acquirement.



# THE RADIANT LIFE

## A LIFE HEROIC.

---

I like the man who faces what he must;  
With step triumphant and a heart of cheer;  
Who fights the daily battle without fear;  
Sees his hopes fail, yet keeps unfaltering trust  
That God is God; that somehow, true and just  
His plans work out for mortals; not a tear  
Is shed when fortune, which the world holds dear,  
Falls from his grasp; better, with love, a crust  
Than living in dishonor; envies not,  
Nor loses faith in man; but does his best,  
Nor ever murmurs at his humbler lot,  
But, with a smile and words of hope, gives zest  
To every toiler: he alone is great,  
Who by a life heroic conquers fate.

SARAH KNOWLES BOLTON.

## THE RADIANT LIFE.

We are indebted to the American company of revisers for the introduction of this beautiful and suggestive word, "radiant," into our Bibles. It does not find place either in the Authorized version or the English revision, but in the American revision it appears in two verses: in Psalm xxxiv. 5, "They looked unto him and were radiant," instead of "were lightened"; and in Isaiah lx. 5, "They shall see and be radiant, and their heart shall thrill and be enlarged," instead of "They shall see and flow together and their heart shall fear and be enlarged." Delitzsch renders the first passage, "They look unto him and brighten up." What a vast number of timid, trembling, care-ridden, disturbed and fretful Christian souls there are to whom one longs to address the exhortation, "Brighten up," "Look pleasant." It surely can be done, and will easily follow when the heart is right.

The story is told of a widow, who, with a forbidding look, was seated in a chair having her picture taken, when the photographer, thrusting

his head out of the black cloth, said: "Just brighten up the eyes a little." Though she tried, the dull, heavy look still lingered. "See here," the woman retorted sharply, "if you think that an old woman that is dull can look bright every time she is told to, you don't know anything about human nature. It takes something from the outside to brighten the eye and illuminate the face." "Oh, no, it doesn't. It is something to be worked from the inside. Try it again," said the photographer. Something in his manner inspired faith, and she tried again, when he exclaimed, "That's good. That's fine. You look twenty years younger." Going home she thought there might be something in it, but resolved to wait and see the picture. When the picture came it was like a resurrection. The face seemed alive with the fires of youth. Thinking and gazing earnestly she said, "If I could do it once I can do it again." Time after time she would go to the mirror and say to herself, "Brighten up. Look a little pleasanter," until a change became noticeable, and the neighbors said, "Why, you are getting young. How do you manage it?" To which she always replied, "It's almost all done from the inside. You just brighten up inside and feel pleasant." It is very true that happiness and contentment are from the inside, and if the heart is not right a whole world cannot give us true joy.

Mere effort of the will, however,—this anecdote, perhaps, makes it important to say—is not very likely to accomplish much in the way of brightening up the face. But if the mind has a good firm grip on God, if faith claims His promises unswervingly, if love divine has taken complete possession of the soul, then the effect will be speedily visible in the countenance. It is very noticeable that in both the quotations given, the one in Psalms and the other in Isaiah, there is a close connection marked between receiving radiance and looking unto Him. In other words, the source of the light is, in a very important sense, outside ourselves, rather than inside, and only as we secure unbroken connection with that source, only as we see that glorious sun, keeping the clouds away from our spiritual sky and basking in His beams, can we radiate much light.

This thought is well expressed by St. Paul in II. Cor. III. 18, "We all with open (or unveiled) face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed (transformed) into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." Yes, yes, if we behold God's glory long enough we come to share it. The light of His countenance lifted upon us for a good while is communicated to us, so that there is a transference of it to us, and a transformation. The beholding mentioned most certainly means a steady

gaze, implying a well-formed habit. It has been fitly said that a glance at Christ will save us—it is but look and live—but only a gaze at Christ will sanctify us fully. And we are entirely persuaded that it is the sad lack of sufficient gazing and beholding and waiting upon God, so prevalent at the present time, that is at the bottom of the superficiality and shallowness, the unsatisfactoriness and inconsistency of the prevailing type of piety. The tendency of the times is to put stress upon the outward rather than the inward, to honor service more than character, to exalt work instead of experience, philanthropy and morality instead of personal religion. A mere enthusiasm for humanity must not be allowed to take the place of devotion to God. "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart" is still the first commandment, and to put the second above it, which is so popular with the worldly or the unreflecting to-day, can bring nothing but harm and weakness to the church. It is largely in this way we have lost our power.

There must be more meditation and more prayer. It is on our knees that we see furthest into the heavens. This hustling, bustling age which cries, "Be up and doing, push, pull, get there," which casts much scorn upon self-examination and scouts the idea that the quiet hour is of any special importance—this age, so far as its

ruling spirit is followed, makes no saints. Great souls are not built up by hurly-burly, in the rush and roar of an over-strenuous outward activity. If communion with God is given the go-by we shall suffer exceedingly. The perfection of holiness takes much time. How often this needs to be said. There is no quick and easy way to this or to anything else of the very highest importance. Pay the price and take it. That is the only rule. Our salvation not only cost the Saviour a great deal, but it costs the saved a great deal. He who really wants to receive it in its fulness and richness, having got a glimpse of the exceeding great preciousness of it, will be more than willing to lay down the price. Many people deceive themselves in thinking that they have a genuine desire for eminent goodness. They have some faint idle wishes in that direction; but that they are only wishes, vague, unproductive, ineffective, fluctuating, is seen from the fact that they are not stirred by them to put forth the requisite effort and use the appointed means. Only that is really desire which straightway frames itself into vigorous endeavor. And such desire will not come unless there be a good deal of thought. "While I was musing," the Psalmist says, "the fire burned, then spake I." It is a process which leads also to deeds and attainments. Thought, feeling, action is the inevitable order.

If thought is shallow, feeling is feeble, and action of no particular account. It is only when ideas get full possession of us that we carry them out effectively in deeds. And how can they get full possession unless we sit down beside them for a good while and let them sink into our souls, unless we cultivate their company and know them through and through.

The point is so plain that it seems almost superfluous to dwell upon it. Yet we are disposed to do it because of the great multitudes that appear to have no adequate or intelligent conception concerning it. They think, or at least say, that the closet is an outworn institution, that the prayer-meeting is antiquated and might as well be abandoned, that emotional religion is of an inferior sort, that the whole scheme of the Christian life needs reconstruction. But the experience of the ages is against them; and their policy is as unsound philosophically as it is contrary to Scripture. If we are to escape self-deception, if we are to live from any special depth of being, if we are to reach any great height of abiding joy—and surely these things are of primary importance—then stillness before God and the steady contemplation of the greatest truths which the human mind is capable of grasping, must on no account be slighted. “On thee do I wait all the day,” says the Psalmist, “my soul waiteth upon

God," or, as the Hebrew has it literally, "my soul is silent unto God." Blessed silence! "They that wait on the Lord shall inherit the earth"; they shall certainly get the good of it in a way that its titular possessors never can. "None that wait on Him shall be ashamed," shall have cause to blush, shall be confounded, or made afraid. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength," for the Lord is the source of soul strength, and only by a faith which is nourished in solitude and silence can the power of God pass into men. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart." To get real strength and courage, and also highest ecstasy, there is no other way.

David, and the other writers of the Hebrew hymns which we call psalms, are continually harping upon joy and praise, as well as upon that quiet contemplation of sacred things which they term "waiting upon God." And the connection between them they make very plain, as in the first psalm, where we read, "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law doth he meditate day and night." It is the meditation that brings the delight, as well as the delight that leads to the meditation. The radiant life, or the life ecstatic, has no better stronghold in the Bible than the Psalms, no better book of direction and authorization. If we cite here a few of

the passages it is but as samples of the very great host which our readers will feel it a privilege to look up and draw out for themselves. "Let all those that take refuge in thee rejoice, let them ever shout for joy" (V. 11), "I will go unto God, my exceeding joy" (XLIII. 4), "Thou makest me glad with joy in thy presence" (XXI. 6), "In thy presence is fulness of joy" (XVI. 11), "In His temple everything saith, Glory" (XXIX. 9), and this is true whether we take temple to mean a single building, or the whole earth, or the believing soul. "Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness" (XLV. 7), "I will be glad and exult in Thee" (IX. 2), "God hath spoken in His holiness, I will exult" (LX. 6), "Let the righteous be glad, let them exult before God" (LXVIII. 3), "I delight to do thy will, O my God" (XL. 8), "I will delight myself in thy statutes," "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage," "Thy law is my delight" (CXIX. 16, 54, 77).

Is not the sort of character and conduct which these vivid expressions betoken fitly called the radiant life? It has close affinity with the sun shining in its strength and glowing with glad effulgence. There is in it a suggestion of light and heat and power and preciousness. It seems to call up images of plenty and wideness, and brilliancy and joy. God's great out-of-doors looks

us in the face, a clear sky salutes us, bright breezes fan our cheeks, we leap and run, we beam with good cheer, we are more than conquerors, we taste the powers of the world to come, we antedate the resurrection day. Radiant, regnant, redolent, are terms which well befit the Christian who has entered on his grand inheritance in Jesus and taken possession of his privileges. His countenance may well beam, his eye sparkle, his cheeks glow, his whole being be buoyant, his whole frame emit effulgence. His gladness should stream from every pore, make itself felt in every pose of his body, movement of his limbs, sound of his voice, word of his lips. He is so full of happiness, has taken it in so completely, is so gloriously charged with it, that he has to pour it forth on every side and by every outlet. There is a contagion of cheerfulness about him. He has a smile that is not on the surface simply, to be rubbed off by adverse circumstances, but goes deep down like the tattooing which has reached the bone. A marvelous piece of good news is perpetually sounding in his ear. A wonderful fortune has come to him, a fortune compared with which all earthly wealth is the merest bubble and bauble. All things are his, all things that he can possibly need; a guarantee has been given him by infinite power that every want shall be met so long as he lives, that not a single good

thing shall ever be lacking in his case. He is a multi-millionaire for riches, a king for power and position; a multi-millionaire, without the crushing cares and problems which embitter the mind and shorten the days; a king without the empty pomp which holds no panacea for grief, the pageantry which is only a prelude to panic fear.

Most surely the thorough-going Christian who is out-and-out for Christ, who has put self fully away and lives for God alone, who implicitly believes the word of truth and rests his soul unwaveringly on the promises is blessed beyond the power of words to express. He can do all things in Christ, he has all things that can possibly be of any use to him, his peace is perfect, his cup of joy overflows, he is magnificently independent of temporal conditions, he is master of every situation in which he is placed, he is conqueror of circumstances. What more can be asked? Will not such an one be radiant? Will he not have a smiling face? He cannot help smiling; because nobody can take away Jesus from him, and, having Jesus, he needs nothing else to make him supremely happy. He can shout "All's Well," above the storms, for the storms only help him on his way. He finds it fun to live in the Beulah Land to which he belongs. He gets every day the finest felicity, the highest hilarity,

the jolliest jocularity. Is it not a pity that a larger proportion of God's dear people do not get saved in this comprehensive and every way satisfactory manner, saved to the uttermost? He is well able to keep that which we commit unto Him, to keep us from falling, ever so little, to garrison with His peace our hearts and minds, to make us stand untouched by trouble, to free us from fear, anxiety and disappointment, to cause us to triumph over all our foes, and give us such a constant speedy victory in every conflict with the adversary that we shall scarcely be conscious there has been any conflict. He can fill us with Himself, cause His Spirit to take such possession of us that without cessation we shall have communion with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Thus shall the Sun of righteousness rise upon us, nevermore to go down, with plentiful healing in His wings; and the life more abundant, the life of heavenly happiness and bliss supreme, the life of faith and hope and love, the life radiant and regnant, shall be ours in largest measure all the time. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!



THE ART OF ALWAYS  
REJOICING.

## THE SECRET OF A HAPPY DAY.

---

Just to let thy Father do  
    What He will;  
Just to know that He is true,  
    And be still.  
Just to follow hour by hour  
    As He leadeth;  
Just to draw the moment's power  
    As it needeth.  
Just to trust Him, that is all!  
    Then the day will surely be  
Peaceful, whatsoe'er befall,  
    Bright and blessed, calm and free.

Just to leave in His dear hand  
    Little things;  
All we cannot understand,  
    All that stings,  
Just to let Him take the care,  
    Sorely pressing,  
Finding all we let Him bear  
    Changed to blessing.  
This is all! and yet the way  
    Marked by Him who loves thee best,  
Secret of a happy day,  
    Secret of His promised rest.

—FRANCES R. HAVERGAL.

## THE ART OF ALWAYS REJOICING.

I call the habit of always rejoicing, which is only another name for the life ecstatic, an art, because I wish to draw attention to the fact that the desired end can only be reached by the systematic arrangement and adoption of the requisite means, that certain rules need to be formulated, and skill in observing them acquired by practice. There is a kind of science involved as well, if by science we mean "knowledge reduced to law and embodied to system." There is both something to be known and something to be done, most emphatically, if we are to gain the heights of perpetual gladness. The phrase "mechanic arts" is commonly used to designate those which aim at utility, and "fine arts" those whose aim is beauty. This particular art will not come under either of these heads exclusively, for it combines both utility and beauty in a marvelous way. There is nothing mechanical about it, but what can be more useful, what has closer relation to wholesome industry, than the power to see

the bright side of things and make the best of all matters.

What, on the other hand, is more beautiful than the spirit of cheerfulness which scatters sunshine and flowers along all paths and diffuses an atmosphere of good fellowship. It can hardly be out of order to term it the art of arts, contributing in the most direct way to the promotion of everything desirable and important, everything which the other arts, in a more roundabout manner, are designed in the end to secure, for they are all practised with a view to the happiness of the race. Poetry, music, painting, sculpture contribute very much to the delight of those classes that are capable of appreciating them, but how far short they come of imparting to the multitude of humanity any abiding bliss. The ruder, humbler arts, mixed up with trade and manual labor, minister in a practical way to the welfare of mankind, but the bodies which they serve can get on with very poor supplies if the souls within are filled with joy. So the art of always rejoicing has a place of permanence which no other can claim. It deserves most careful study, most diligent practice.

It rests on a twofold foundation, that is, there are two great truths to be accepted, two practices to be acquired, before we can reach the desired goal. If either of them be rejected or neglected,

the art can never be learned. The first is, to make our will one with God's will; the second to identify God's will with the occurrences of each moment. In other words, there is a double identification to be wrought out, both ethically and practically, the identification of my will with God's will, and the identification of God's will with every event small or great. It will at once be seen that this brings our will into perfect accord with every event, precluding all friction, paving the way for perpetual triumph. If we behold and hail a living, loving will of our Heavenly Father in every minute happening of each second, we are in a constant attitude of welcoming gladness and genuine exuberance as we greet the day's unfoldings. We cannot possibly require more to make us happy than that our will should be continually done in all that comes on; and such will infallibly be the case when God's will and ours are one, provided God's will is always done. To this latter point we must address ourselves a little later. It needs careful treatment, for very many have trouble with it, and the subject is attended with complications. The former matter is simpler and may be more easily dispatched, for the theory is not difficult, however hard may be the practice.

The theory is simple in this sense, that every one, at least every one who is at all likely to read

this book, will readily admit that by creation, redemption, and preservation, we belong to God, we have no rights as against Him. He is the proprietor, we are the tenants. He is the owner, we are the stewards. He is the King, we are the subjects. It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we have been bought by precious blood; for each breath that we draw we are indebted to His care. And, therefore, His will ought to be our will at every conceivable point. We do not, any of us, dispute this. We are all prepared to grant, also, that His will is always best, that we lose nothing by submission to Him, that in setting up our own rebellious will in any matter we are acting foolishly, we are preferring a lesser good to a greater, we are depriving ourselves of a blessing, we are choosing that which is every way inferior. Yet we constantly do it. Here is the puzzle and the mystery.

It is amazing how fond we are of having our own way, irrespective of the divine will, irrespective of real right. How prone we are to imagine that the sum of all happiness lies just there. What mistake could be greater? It springs from a feeling that we know best what is good for us; and that is not so at all. God could not take a surer way of compassing our ruin than by gratifying all our passing fancies, putting the reins of government into our foolish

hands. We are by no means fit to take charge of our destinies. We are thoroughly deluded in supposing that if every wish could be gratified we should be perfectly happy. Our natural wishes for a multitude of things that seem at the moment desirable are the poorest possible guides to our permanent well-being. We know far too little in a dozen directions to have control of the matter. Our ignorance of the future and its complicated possibilities, this alone would make it out of the question for us always to choose wisely. Our shrinking from pain would make it wholly improbable that we should firmly apply the eventually healing but temporarily hurtful remedies for our moral maladies. The lancet, the plaster, the purge would never seem to us actually necessary. We do not know ourselves well enough to prescribe. And we are exceedingly apt to think that sunshine is always better than storm.

The difficulties, then, in the way of bringing our will into oneness with God's are by no means small. We are not, all of us, so logically constituted that the mere statement of the above indisputable facts—that we ought to submit, and that it is better to submit—carries much practical weight with us or moves us out of our long accustomed ruts. There needs to come some stress of feeling to impel us in the right direction.

We must be mightily wrought upon from on high. We must see Jesus suffering, bleeding, dying, pleading for our redemption from all sin. A wave of emotion appears essential. And this emotion, to be a permanent and genuinely useful factor, must, as a rule, be the result of thought. Meditation is the daughter of retirement, and the mother of action. But for retirement we consider that we have no time, even if we have the disposition; and meditation any way is, we say, not much in our line. Feeling may be strongly excited for the time by the contagion of a crowd, by the skilful manipulation of some accomplished operator, by the whirlwind of song, or the earthquake of oratory; but it often happens that God is not in these earthquakes and whirlwinds very decidedly, and there is no permanence to their effects. When the commotion is over things settle down on the old basis. No new truths have been firmly grasped, and so no resulting revolution in the life has been really accomplished. The still small voice of deep conviction is generally heard in secret. It must be prepared for, invited, cherished, and obeyed.

Just here, doubtless, is one chief reason why so few persons get a genuine grip, a permanent hold, on the higher things. Here is where the art comes in, where regular rules are needed, and persistent adherence to a well formulated plan is

called for. It is at this point that camp-meetings and conventions find a philosophical basis for the great good they often accomplish. The attendants are shut away from their ordinary occupations and compelled for a series of days to consider thoughtfully these deep matters of spiritual religion. Their attention being thus concentrated, the subject has a chance to make its due impression, feeling is aroused, and action is likely to follow. But large gatherings, or even small gatherings, are not essential for the putting into operation of this process. If a person will deliberately set himself to read and think on these lines, he will, in consequence of such reading and thinking, be stirred with desire, directed as to methods, and put in the way of results. And the results will be likely to be more enduring than on the other plan, since the means used can be more readily repeated. For while conventions may be far away, or infrequent, the Bible and other good books are always at hand.

The power to make good use of such literature, it may be said, is not given to all. Which is doubtless true. They who have it not will not be responsible for what, if used, it might have brought them. But more commonly than is perhaps supposed there is a sufficient germ of this power, which only needs proper cultivation to blossom forth in full vigor. We see no reason

why people who can read the daily paper should not read the Scriptures. And there is almost always available in pastor or other religious friend a guide whose counsel, if complied with, will bring the seeker on into fuller and further light. One can always say to himself, I know that I have neglected my Bible shamefully, I have let the pressure of other matters crowd it out, when I could have managed, had my heart been set upon it, to get a little time each day for its perusal; I know I have lost ground because of its neglect; I will begin from this hour to do differently; I will search diligently to see what sort of a man I ought to be and what provisions are made for my help; and I hereby covenant with God to follow forthwith wherever He may show me the path, confident that each step taken will bring me on where another is made plain.

Whoever does this, we are very sure, will not be long left in darkness. God's Spirit will take him in charge, illuminating the word, strengthening his purpose, and giving him deliverance. Is it not perfectly feasible to do this? Does not he who refuses to do it show that he has no desire whatever to advance, in that he will not heed so simple a suggestion? And must he not be left until in some way he becomes thoroughly ashamed of himself, or profoundly convinced of his deplorable

mistake in living so far below his privilege, living in the gloomy cellars of God's house when he might be in the sunlit chambers? Why should so many prefer the cellars? Is it that they do not feel that the higher rooms are for them? Is it that the exertion of climbing the stairs is beyond their power? Or do they think that the advantages of the upper rooms will not repay for the effort? If they have known at all the love which Jesus has for them, how can they accuse Him of wanting to deprive them of such rich blessings? If they have any love to Jesus how can they be willing to grieve Him so constantly as they do by thrusting away His proffers and disobeying His precepts? Sin remains as much a mystery in these more refined regions as in the grosser districts. It is unreasonable and horrible wherever seen, contrary to common sense and the laws of understanding, as well as to the laws of heaven and the happiness of men.

This coming into oneness with the will divine has been variously termed consecration, self-renunciation, abandonment, and surrender. The words are sometimes discriminated a little, but they seem to us essentially the same. They approach the subject from slightly different angles, and suggest various figures of speech, but the meaning is substantially alike. Perhaps a few directions or explanations may be in place just here

as to how it can best be done. The object in hand is to become wholly the Lord's, to recognize to the utmost His rightful claims upon us, to take the one only position or attitude which conscience fully approves and which is the doorway to unspeakable blessing. It is not a small thing. It is not to be turned off rapidly or lightly, as though there were little depth and difficulty to it. There can hardly be too much deliberation and consideration given to the matter. We propose the following heads for reflection:

1. Our consecration should be *unreserved*. When our will is one with God's we shall will what God wills always, in everything, nothing less, nothing more, nothing else. There will be no reservation, hesitation, equivocation, or cessation about it. The very smallest things must be included, down to the minutest particular. It is not the value of that which is withheld that makes the trouble but the spirit of withholding, which may find manifestation in the most unlooked-for quarters. It is usually some very small point of pride or self-will that blocks the way and prevents progress. We hold on to it, perhaps half-unconsciously. We turn our eyes another way, and declare that we behold nothing which is not given up. We try to persuade ourselves that it is of no imaginable importance, and may be safely disregarded. Perhaps it is a slight feeling of hard-

ness toward a neighbor, an unsettled quarrel not worthy the name of quarrel, a coldness and stiffness, a touch of envy and jealousy and dislike which makes us ready to believe evil of the person, or even perhaps to speak evil concerning him—this it is that stands in the way. Perhaps it is a cherished indulgence to which we have long been accustomed, which nearly everybody in our set looks upon as unobjectionable, about which there is fair opportunity for difference of opinion, but which we know that many good people condemn, and which is at least of doubtful propriety when tested by the highest standards of religion.

We are liable to come up against a snag of this sort in a dozen different directions, if we pursue our researches relentlessly and are determined to get to the very bed rock in our investigations. To change the figure, if we will carry a lighted candle into every dark corner of our soul, peering into every nook and crevice and cranny, we shall be very sure to come upon some cobwebs at least, or some forgotten articles which we did not really know we possessed, much less had any liking for. But when we have discovered them, and dragged them out to the light of day, we must deal with them without mercy. There can be no sort of compromise. There must be a very clear understanding between ourselves and God as to

who is master. He must have His way in everything—in things eaten and drunken, in every item of expenditure, every moment of time, every particle of influence, every question of example, in our apparel, our adorning, our associations and companionships, our words and looks, our business, our family, our most private hours, our most public doings. It will necessarily take quite a while to look over this whole field and consider the entire territory. But it needs to be done. Every question must be answered, every situation faced. We must put to ourselves some searching inquiries, such as, Am I willing to be poor, to be nothing in the sight of men, to have my name cast out as evil, to forfeit the respect of those in whose smiles I have basked, to go where God wants me to go even if it be to Africa or China or Greenland, to say what God wants me to say, even if it means that I shall be laughed at and disliked, to do what God wants me to do, even if it involves great pain, to be in all ways what God wants me to be? Some have found it profitable to make a detailed inventory in these various directions, to draw up a solemn covenant with God, signing it upon their knees. Anything is in order that helps us to realize most fully the weighty nature of the transaction, its profound significance, as constituting an epoch with us, a date that shall stand out in our days, a turning

point, the time when we ceased to be a half-way Christian and became whole-hearted for God, when we said,

“Lord thy love, at last, hath conquered;  
None of self and all of Thee.”

2. Our consecration should be *intelligent*. This needs to be added because many people, while pursuing the course just recommended, have got all tangled up, befogged, mystified by a morbid scrupulosity which is not profitable. Sanity and spirituality—it cannot be said too often—need never be separated. We are never called upon to part with our common sense. Reason has never occasion to abdicate its throne, for it was given us from God to be our guide. There is no demand for fanaticism, properly so called, that is, for disregarding reason under the plea of direct guidance from heaven, for acting upon impressions which one cannot be sure are from God. The fanatic is given over to wild notions under the influence of a heated imagination which he calls special divine inspiration. Many have been led astray here. They have treated the Bible with most unseemly freedom, considering themselves as so indwelt by the Spirit as to be lifted far above the book, authorized to twist its words into most unnatural meanings, paying no heed to what the writer must have intended to convey, using

it as a sort of riddle book to be opened at random, a bundle of isolated phrases that may be manipulated to suit the mood of the hour or the exigencies of some pet theory. They expect to attain ends without using the ordinary means connected by God with those ends; to understand the Scriptures without studying them; to speak properly in public without premeditation; to reach maturity of Christian experience without growth; to keep well although disregarding the laws of health; and to get well although disregarding the laws of recovery.

Many people get into trouble by conjuring up all sorts of hobgoblins, and then, becoming frightened at them, they retreat. This is one of Satan's favorite tricks. At his instigation they are ready to imagine that they will be called to make this, that or the other utterly improbable and practically impossible sacrifice, from which they instinctively and perhaps very properly draw back. They get an idea that everything which is at all pleasant, or in any degree like other people, is to be abandoned, that they are to become scarecrows in appearance and maniacs in manner. The proper answer to all this nonsense is that God is a God of reason and a God of love, not an ogre, nor a despot, nor a fiend, nor a lunatic. He is not lying in wait to take a mean advantage of us as soon as we put ourselves into His hands, to

strip us bare of all that seems to make life worth having, to do us harm, or make us ridiculous without necessity, to take from us all our friends, our family, our influence, our health. Nothing of the kind. He will never ask or command us to do a thing which He will not make clear to us is His blessed will, in regard to which He will not remove all reasonable doubt, and for which He will not give us, when the time comes, all needed strength. He will not give it to us now in advance, for that is not His method, nor is it really possible. We may, in a way, let the future alone, for we are to live by the moment, and we can well afford to leave everything to His wisdom and love. After we have peered down, as well as we can, into the depths of our soul and become convinced that everything there is all right now, to the best of our knowledge and belief, nothing consciously withheld, a firm purpose there to live for God alone, then we can rest and be at peace, well assured that light will come and power will come as the necessity arises, opening up to us hour by hour.

3. Our consecration should be *irrevocable* and yet *progressive*. It is important that the two words should be kept in mind together. Our dedication is once for all, never to be taken back, made with as full a perception as possible of all that is included in it, as full a forecasting of all

the probabilities in the case as we can compass, a finished transaction, not to be reopened. It is not to be made for a short time, for a few months, or until we get past some crisis, but for life, and for eternity. There must be no trifling with God. It is a covenant of blood, most sacred and binding. It finds its parallel in the Hebrew custom when a bondservant, or slave, refused to receive his freedom at the time when such an opportunity was offered him and the master in token of his action, his binding choice, took him to the doorpost of the dwelling and there with an awl joined his ear to the post. His language then was, "Mine ears hast thou bored, I will not go out forever." After that, "Lo, I come to do thy will" would be his only utterance, under all situations. This sort of a covenant is one that summons all our will power, and includes our totality of strength. With lips thin, teeth set, hands clenched, we cry, Death, if need be, but no surrender to Satan, to doubt and fear, to sin of any kind.

Such a consecration does not need to be repeated in the same sense, but it does need to be reviewed and revised from time to time, that it may be brought fully up to date, completed according to our advancing knowledge, made deeper and fuller as God gives more to put in. This is a very different thing from repeating it as though

something had been taken back or recalled. One may be entirely certain that he has done nothing of that kind, and yet may know that since the date of entire consecration, perhaps now years in the past, he has come to understand much more completely what the entireness covers, and has come to have a larger personality to be offered. We may give all to God at twenty, but at thirty or forty may comprehend far better the wide-sweeping inclusiveness of the word.

Some people are disposed to say, "I give to God all that I know and all that I don't know"; and the words, perhaps, are not to be sharply criticised; but a note of warning about them may well be sounded, for it seems to be an unquestionable fact that we cannot make over to God what is wholly unknown to us with the same degree of effectiveness as we do what we know. We may repeat the words, but they will not carry any precise significance to us. When rightly understood it is simply an expression of a present purpose to give to God whatever He reveals from time to time when that revealing shall come. We must watch closely all along in order actually to carry out the purpose as the occasion arises, and be fully ready to receive then the fresh light He may impart as to the increased thoroughness possible to be put into the surrender.

A box is *full* in a general way when it is crowd-

ed with cannon balls, but there is still room for plenty of bullets; and when no more of them can be inserted a large quantity of shot can be put in; then into the interstices left even by the shot, sand may be sprinkled, and in addition to that not a little water may be added; while on top of all a few rose leaves may be lightly flung. It is hard to get our hearts so full of love that there will not be room for a little more, a rose leaf or two. Our wills may be in line with God's as such things are crudely estimated by our undisciplined powers of measurement. But with further training of hand and eye we come to perceive that there is a mathematical accuracy of adjustment which is far beyond the former oneness, and perhaps still beyond that a microscopic coincidence. To the soul that is covetously bent on the nearest possible approach to absolute oneness with his Lord there is nothing too small to be taken into the account.

EVERY EVENT A PROVIDENCE.

## THE ELIXIR.

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Teach me, my God and King,  
In all things Thee to see,  
And what I do in anything,  
To do it as for Thee.

A man that looks on glass,  
On it may stay his eye,  
Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass,  
And then the heav'n esp'y.

All may of Thee partake;  
Nothing can be so mean  
Which with this tincture (for Thy sake)  
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgery divine,  
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,  
Makes that and th' action fine.

This is the famous stone  
That turneth all to gold;  
For that which God doth touch and own  
Cannot for less be told.

GEORGE HERBERT.

## EVERY EVENT A PROVIDENCE.

We showed, in the previous chapter, that two things were necessary to give a complete command of the theory and practice of perpetual joy. We claimed that he only could have this inestimable gift, or attainment, who submitted himself absolutely to the will divine, and was then able to identify this will with whatever came to him; for, in that case, as is perfectly clear, all the occurrences and events of daily life expressing to him the present will of God, and his only attitude toward that will in all its shapes being one of joyful acceptance, because of the deep love of which it is the vehicle, there will be nothing to which he can object, and nothing which will not minister to his happiness.

The second part of this double proposition, it will be at once seen, is fully as important as the first, fully as essential to the mastery of the art of always rejoicing. For, no matter how complete our union with the will of God, if we are not certain which of the happenings of life are to be regarded as His will, we are about as much

at the mercy of events as we were before. Of what avail is it to say, with Faber,

"I worship Thee, sweet Will of God,  
And all Thy ways adore,"

provided this "sweet will" only includes, in our view, a certain class of things, and many of those most trying are completely shut out. Or what boots it to say, with St. Paul, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," if we balk at the word "all" and except from its scope those things which are mingled with human malice or mistakes, either other people's or our own? To make us wholly impervious to the assaults of the foe we need a cast-iron creed at this point. We need, in some way, to be able to say, with perfect assurance and the completest conviction, having thought it through and reasoned it out, God's will to me is seen in all by which I am touched, for the simple and sufficient reason that God is in every event, however small, however large, He is the power back of it, He is the producing cause. Can this conclusion be solidly reached, and unassailably held? We are confident that it can, and that it is of the utmost consequence to the Christian heart to trace the argument, that it may rest in the result.

The deep necessities of practical piety seem to us to require a distinct, unequivocal recognition

of the absolute sovereignty of God in the affairs of the world. Not otherwise can there be that constant perception of the Divine Being as always appearing, even in the minutest events, which is so essential to any close walk with Him. There cannot be that direct dealing with Him so promotive of entire deliverance from the distresses that come when the provocations of men and the perversity of things fill the eye of the soul. God's promises cannot afford a sufficient basis for our trust, unless His power to carry them out to the very letter under all circumstances is put beyond question. Prayer will find its pinions clipped if any doubt whatever is cast upon the ability of the Father to succor His children. Our peace will suffer irretrievably if there is any loop-hole, even the slightest, for the possible defeat of God's purposes concerning us. Christian resignation under the minor adversities and little trials, as well as the greater troubles of life, becomes practically impossible unless we are quite sure that the hand of God, and not the hand of man or the devil, sends the calamity; and we can hardly be thus sure in any instance unless we are in every instance. Only he can rejoice always, without the possibility of being pronounced a fool or a fanatic, who knows that always what touches him is a manifestation of the blessed will of his loving Father. This surety is the source and the only

source, of the deepest peace, the highest exultation, the warmest gratitude, the clearest hope, the strongest trust, the profoundest patience, the completest calm, and the supremest beauty that can crown the religious life. It is the firm foundation of all personal piety, the unfailing fountain of the sweetest, noblest, truest devotion.

This being so, we shall surely be desirous to grasp, if we can, a truth so fraught with benefit in our daily walk. We shall apply ourselves to the task of tracing the argument with a mind well disposed towards its acceptance. It hinges wholly, so far as the philosophic aspect of it is concerned, on the firm establishment of just two positions. The first is, that God is the source of all motion in the physical universe. It may be said, we think, with confidence, that this is now the practically unanimous conclusion of those best qualified to have an opinion on the subject, or at least of all Christian theists, if not of all who recognize the existence of God at all. They are substantially agreed that there must be a Power working through the mechanism of the universe, and that this power is the Being we call God, that He is the only ultimate force in material matters, and hence the sole responsible author of all physical action. This view, not a very recent one, has been constantly strengthening its hold on the men of the learned world for a long time. Dr.

William B. Carpenter, President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science a generation ago, said, in the second chapter of his work on *Mental Physiology*, "All the phenomena of nature are manifestations of the constant and all-pervading energy of a Mind of infinite perfection. The phenomena of the universe are but a continual revelation of the universal presence and ceaseless agency of the Deity. The recognition of the universal and all-controlling agency of the Deity, and of His presence in creation rather than on the outside of it, is a great truth. The agencies of nature are the ministers of an all-wise and all-powerful Ruler." Professor Alfred Russel Wallace said twenty-five or thirty years ago, "It does not seem an improper conclusion that all force is will force, and thus the whole universe is not merely dependent on, but actually is, the will of one supreme Intelligence."

The position of the accredited science of the present day can probably be stated by no one more fairly representative than Dr. William North Rice, Professor of Geology in Wesleyan University, from whose book, "*Christian Faith in an Age of Science*," issued not long ago, we make the following quotations. He writes, "We find the ground of all existence in the will of a personal God." "Matter has no existence apart from the continuous energy of divine will upholding

all things by the word of His power." "All philosophical theists must hold that the cause of the uniformities of nature is to be found in the will of an immanent Intelligence whose plans are changeless because His wisdom is perfect from all eternity. Not an atom of matter has ever changed its position but in obedience to His will." "Providence is not an exceptional interference with the course of nature; the course of nature is itself providence. Law and providence are only two phases of the same truth." "God's providence extends to all details of individual experience." "To the Infinite Intelligence all and each are alike present." "As nothing is too great for His power, so nothing is too small for His attention. He guides the flakes of star-dust slowly gathering into worlds. He marks no less the fall of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads. No meteor, no animalcule, no atom, escapes the infinite watchfulness of omniscience, or is forgotten by the all-embracing wisdom of providence." "No crime can be consummated—no sinful purpose can obtain objective fulfillment—unless the result contribute to the advancement of the eternal plans of God. 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.' We are bound, then, to recognize as providential those experiences that come to us

as the result of the follies and sins of others or of ourselves."

Philosophy and science join heartily, hand with hand, in affirming these most important and most comforting truths. Dr. Borden P. Bowne, Professor of Philosophy in Boston University, who stands among the foremost of American thinkers, in his recently issued volume, "*The Immanence of God*," has a great deal on this theme, only a little of which can we take space to quote. He says, "The supernatural is the ever present ground and administrator of nature; nature is simply the form under which the Supreme Reason and Will manifest themselves, a fixed form of the Divine causality, of the living Will which worketh hitherto and worketh evermore; that living Will by which all things stand, and from which they forever proceed." "God is the ever present agent in the on-going of the world, and nature is but the form and product of His ceaseless activity. We are in God's world, and the ultimate reason why anything is, or changes, or comes to pass, must be sought in the will and purpose of that God in whom all things live and move and have their being." "Providence covers all events. Sometimes the Divine purpose seems manifest, while at other times it is hidden. The purpose, however, is equally real, and equally controlling at all times, though not equally manifest." "If

there be any providence it must be special, a providence in general would be no providence at all. Any real providence in our lives must specify itself into perfectly definite and special ordering of events, or it vanishes altogether. All providences are special providences, or they are nothing; if there be purpose in anything, there is purpose in everything. The creative plan must include all its details, and the immanent creative will must specifically realize all its special demands. Both philosophy and religion unite in this view." "We are in the hands of Him who made us; and all things and events immediately depend upon Him. He never grows weary or forgets. Every life is included in the divine plan. Every life is as intimately near and present to the divine thought and care as it would be if all the rest were away." "Nature itself is providence. We must see a divine causality in all things, and the naturalness of the divine working. God works His will in history, not apart from men, but through men and in partnership with them; and the work is no less divine on that account."

Theologians and preachers, old and young, Arminian as well as Calvinistic, are outspoken on the same side of this matter. John Wesley said, "True resignation is to embrace all events good and bad as His will." "All circumstances are under the wise direction of God, who allots to

everyone what is most expedient for him." "God orders all things. As God made the world, so He governs the world, and everything that is in it, and all men, good and bad, little and great. God is all in all." "God is the true author of all the motion that is in the universe. God is the life of everything that lives, in any kind or degree. He is the foundation of the life of animals, the power by which the heart beats and the circulating juices flow. He is the fountain of all the life which man possesses in common with the other animals." "We are to acknowledge the hand of God in whatsoever instruments He makes use of. It makes little difference whether He executes His purpose by the powers of heaven and hell, or by the mistakes, carelessness, or malice of men. If a destroying angel marches forth against a town or country, it is God who empowers him to destroy. If bad men distress one or more of their fellow-creatures the ungodly are a sword of His. If fire, hail, wind, or storm be let loose upon the earth, they only fulfill His word, so certain it is that there is no evil in any place which the Lord, in this sense, hath not done."

In "*The Christian Faith*," published a few months ago by a disciple of Wesley, Dr. Olin A. Curtis, Professor of Systematic Theology in Drew Theological Seminary, we find the same

note sounded. He says that "all objective things" are to be looked at "as mere causal points where God is, and where God works"; "the universe is entirely and constantly dynamic of God, nothing other than God in action"; "all things are activities of the living God"; "God the only force in the world"; "God the cause of the cosmos, its present force, its life, its beauty"; outside the realm of the volitions "there is no causation other than that of the divine will." This "Christian monism," he says, "the average man under his superficial style of thinking," can scarcely grasp; but it is true and extremely important nevertheless. Dean Goulburn of the Anglican Church writes, "The occurrences of each day, however unlooked-for, however contrary to expectation, are God-sent, and those which affect you sent especially and with discrimination to yourself." Canon Kingsley affirms "that God can and does arrange by a perpetual providence every circumstance whatsoever, so making laws take effect only when and where He chooses, I believe utterly." "One thing we must keep up, if we intend to be anything like witnesses for God, that is, the continual, open verbal reference of everything, even to the breaking of a plate, to God and God's providence, as the Easterns do." "I believe not only in special providence, but in the whole universe as one infinite complexity of spe-

cial providences. His favorite expression for nature was "the acted will of God," or "the will of God revealed in things."

These quotations must suffice. It should be distinctly understood, however, that they are only a few out of the great multitude that might easily be given, so widespread has come to be the acceptance of this truth, and the realization of its vast value on many accounts. May we not now consider that the reader, who has carefully perused these words, is satisfied as to the entire tenability of the first of the two positions which we are interested in establishing, the rock foundation for his faith and the inexhaustible fountain of his joy? God is the responsible author and originator of each occurrence in the physical or material world, whether that occurrence be in connection with human activity or entirely divorced therefrom, and *every event is*, in the strictest sense of the term, *a providence*.

We proceed, now, to the second of the positions referred to above. This must be grasped with as much firmness as the first if we are to escape the difficulty which has no doubt already occurred to the reader, and led him to protest, perhaps, in spirit, against the proposition laid down. He has been saying to himself, Does not this theory make God the author of sin, the responsible agent for all the iniquity in the world, all the

wickedness, even that of the foulest and most horrible description, and could there be any blasphemy worse than this? Such would indeed be blasphemy unspeakable and unthinkable. It has, however, no place whatever in the theory; it only *seems* to, so long as we form no clear conception as to *what sin is*. Our second position, then, is this: sin resides only in the will; it is a wrong volition, an evil choice, a decision to disobey God, choosing in a way contrary to the divine approval. A little reflection will show that sin cannot consist of any mere external action, no matter what that action may be, any motion of bones or muscles. These outward movements have no moral character whatever. They may be produced by a galvanic battery. The sin lies back of the outward act, and resides in the motive or intention. Two persons may do precisely the same outward act, the one of them doing it sinfully, and the other with perfect innocence. Nay, the same person may at different times do the same thing with directly opposite ends in view. Two men may each give money to a third, precisely the same external act in both cases, but the first man gives it to relieve distress, the second to procure murder; and it is plain that the different moral character of the two men would be indicated not by the outward action, identical in the two, but by the different intentions which lay behind. A

good man may administer arsenic to a person as a medicine to heal him; a bad man may administer arsenic to a person as a poison to kill him. One preacher may declare God's truth from the love of it, or from devotion to its divine Author; while another may declare the same truth, perhaps in the same words, moved by the love of personal praise, or the selfish desire of preferment.

This idea is by no means novel, and yet it proves to be one hard for the average, or untrained, mind to grasp and hold in the face of appearances, and of the common usage of human talk. We are so accustomed to hearing the actions of men ascribed to their unrestrained, uncontrolled power, and to hearing these actions called sinful, that we are much startled to hear the correctness of these expressions challenged, and to be told that things are altogether different from what they seem. It takes us quite a while to get accustomed to the thought that, strictly speaking, there are no sinful actions but only sinful volitions, or sinful persons, and that man alone is responsible for the volitions, while God alone is responsible for the actions.

It is a fact that the terms moral and immoral, innocent and guilty can be applied with entire propriety only to men and women, to free moral agents; they cannot be applied to deeds except in an accommodated sense, by a convenient figure of

speech. We cannot ordinarily do without the figure, and in popular discourse it is proper enough to use it; indeed, we must use it if we are to be understood. But when we wish for scientific precision of language, to get at the exact truth, the figure must certainly be discarded. We observe this rule in many other matters. For example, everybody says that the sun rises and sets. And in the loose, popular, colloquial sense it does. Men will always speak of it as so doing, and properly enough; such speech is sufficiently accurate for ordinary usage and is perfectly understood. But in the strict, scholarly, scientific sense, of course, it is not correct; and when men are using language of precision they speak of the earth's motion and not of the sun's, as the cause of our day and night. The rotundity of the earth, and the swiftness with which it and we are whirling through space, are similar truths which we constantly ignore in common language. In like manner the strict truth that men are responsible only for their volitions, and not for outward acts and events, cannot, as a general thing, be made much use of in ordinary conversation or preaching. But it is very important that it be held firmly in mind by those capable of understanding it, and be presented where it is likely to do good. Especially is its perception important for those desiring to apprehend the doctrine of divine prov-

idence, and to get from it the consolation which it holds for distressed humanity. For this blessed doctrine seems inextricably bound up with this distinction, and stripped of much of its power where the distinction is denied or overlooked. We are confident that it will pay our readers well to go over this chapter, if necessary, several times and master it thoroughly, testing it at all points until completely convinced of its absolute truth. Then their belief will rest on a bed-rock foundation which nothing can undermine, and they can view with perfect equanimity all the doubts and fears which so continually surge in upon them. To make the matter entirely clear, however, some other points need explanation, and another chapter must be devoted to these.



EVERYTHING A GODSEND.

## SOME TIME.

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Some time, when all life's lessons have been learned,  
And sun and stars forevermore have set,  
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,  
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,  
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,  
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;  
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,  
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath  
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend;  
And that sometimes the sable pall of death  
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.  
If we could push ajar the gates of life,  
And stand within, and all God's workings see,  
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,  
And for each mystery could find a key!

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!  
God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;  
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart,—  
Time will reveal the chalices of gold.  
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land  
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,  
When we shall clearly see and understand,  
I think that we shall say, "God knew the best!"

MARY RILEY SMITH.

## EVERYTHING A GODSEND.

We are well aware that the theory of Providence, whose main features we explained in the previous chapter, is more radical and uncompromising than that usually presented, and hence may startle or even shock some of our readers. They will at first, perhaps, be even repelled by it through a failure to grasp its real meaning, or comprehend the operations it contains. It is not unusual, indeed, to hear ministers trying to comfort those who have been subjected to much trial by assuring them that it was not God who had sent these things upon them, that God had nothing to do with it, that their kind heavenly Father would not dream of doing any such thing. It had come altogether and solely from Satan. And the sufferer, strange as it seems to the writer, would appear to get no little consolation from this view, and to prefer to think that he was in the hands of the devil rather than in the hands of the Lord. His confused mind doubtless deemed that there was no other way to save the benevolence of God except by denying His omnipotence, by greatly limiting His power; and he would rather the

Deity should be kind, kind in the only fashion he could understand, kind in that He always gave him pleasant things, than have One perfectly able to carry out all His plans if those plans were to be beyond the creature's small intelligence.

To the writer it appears altogether better to save both God's benevolence and power by the confession of our utter inability to comprehend the depth and breadth and length and height of His ways. It need cost us no pangs to admit that we are finite while He is infinite, that we are very ignorant while He is all-wise, and that we see but a day while He sees eternity. Surely it is nothing derogatory to the character of God to suppose that He has all-sufficient reasons hidden from us for doing things which from our standpoint could not be defended.

What more natural than that many things occur in the wide sweep of His operations which must for the time be dark to us; what more foolish than to demand that He instantly explain to us all His dealings on pain of forfeiting our confidence. We see that earthly parents could not do this to their infant children, and a far greater distance separates the Infinite Being from us than separates us from our little ones. God conceals His purposes, or at least His methods, that we may walk by faith, not sight. His arrangement is admirably adapted to help us in the cultivation

of humility, and patience, and hope, and resignation. It is only pride and arrogance that demand to know instead of trusting. And it is exceedingly strange that any of God's children should jump, as it were, into the arms of Satan for comfort, when God sends hard things upon them, rather than confess their own ignorance. Of course we cannot understand all of God's ways. But it is very poor policy, indeed, to resort in our perplexity to explanations that will not stand calm scrutiny, and that eventually make impossible any settled peace of mind.

Many who count themselves good people, who say weekly the Apostle's Creed wherein they formally acknowledge Father, Son and Holy Ghost as the Trinity they worship, do really, in their lives, worship a totally different trinity. We speak not of the worldlings who worship Fame, Fashion and Fortune, but of fairly devout persons who are far from turning their backs, as they think, on God. To Him they give a portion of their adoration, when He does the things that suit them. But when He does things which do not fall in with their ideas, which seem to them evil and cruel and unjust, then straightway the devil takes His place, and to him is ascribed the authorship of events. He is erected into a power quite great enough to justify the trembling worship paid him in pagan lands by millions of terri-

fied devotees, and quite great enough to defeat, at his will, the most cherished plans of the Almighty.

And the third member of this trinity is Nature, to whom is given credit for everything which bears the stamp of regularity and uniformity. We hear a great deal from such people about "Nature's laws," and to listen to them you would surely think that God had nothing to do with the ordinary ongoing of the seasons, or the changes in the weather, or the processes of growth and decay, and such like. And, least of all, do they admit that it is God who produces earthquakes, cyclones and volcanic eruptions. All of these, with them, are most emphatically and exclusively the work of the mysterious deity they call NATURE. No habit could be more destructive of true and habitual communion with God. It is much to be lamented that so many good but thoughtless people fall into the ways of the ungodly secular papers with their idiotic and heathenish talk about "Jupiter Pluvius" and "the clerk of the weather," phrases which would seem to be coined and used for the express purpose of getting rid of God. Far better for us is it to accept the Bible usage which ascribes to God the falling of the rain, the springing of the grass, the clothing of the lilies with beauty, the feeding of the ravens, the satisfying the desires of every living thing. This

brings us into communion with Him at all points, and makes life rich indeed. There need be no confusion in this matter. All is law. All is God. It is not the law that works ; it is God that works according to law, that is, according to His own fixed principles and plans and methods. Law does nothing ; nature does nothing. God does all. Let us hold firmly to the divineness of the natural, and the naturalness of the divine.

Some who are timid in their mental make-up, and not very logical in their processes of thought, find relief in attempting to draw a distinction between God's causative and permissive provi- dences, between what He permits and what He actually does or purposes. They deem it preferable to say, with reference to events that are connected with sin or calamity, that God permits them. They seem to think that the burden of the world's painful occurrences—the shipwrecks, the explosions, the collisions, the conflagrations, the hurricanes, the earthquakes, the epidemics, the acts connected with violence and crime—can thus be shifted from God's shoulders, if He be said simply to permit them.

But the distinction, though it has a truth at its basis, and is well enough for popular effect, is not strictly tenable in this form. There cannot be practically any difference of importance between permitting a thing and actually doing it, provided

the person who is said to permit it has it in his power to prohibit. If he can prohibit and does not choose, he virtually assumes the responsibility of the action; he says, under the present circumstances, this action is better than any other, and better than inaction. Archbishop Whately, whose keen, calm, judicial intellect was rarely, if ever, befogged by the ambiguities of words, saw this point clearly, and writes, in one of his notes on Bacon's *Essays*, "Whatever happens must be according to the will of the Most High, since He does not interpose to prevent it." And who will have the hardihood to say, with reference to any calamity whatsoever, God could not have prevented that? The Almighty has such multitudinous resources, such numberless ways of working, that He never can be at a loss to carry out His plans in nature. As Wesley says, "We are assured that whatsoever God wills He can never want instruments to perform, since He is able even of these stones to raise up instruments to do His pleasure."

It is true that God does not propose ordinarily to work miracles or to stand in the way of so-called natural results; He prefers, for wise reasons of discipline and training to us, that natural causes, as we term them, should work to their customary ends. But in so deciding He practically adopts and sanctions the end reached, so

that it becomes His own doing for which He is plainly responsible. The common sense of the world endorses the proverb that he who does a thing through another virtually does it himself, and whatever a being with perfect power to prevent deliberately permits, thereby becomes as much his own as though no other one were concerned in it.

If I hold securely leashed in my hand a dog whose whole desire is to get at the cat crouching before him, and I, with full power to keep the dog where he is, and with full knowledge of what will occur if I do not thus keep him, choose to open my hand and let him kill the cat, it is idle to say that I did not myself kill the cat as really and effectively as if I had taken it by the throat and strangled it. Hence it seems wholly proper to affirm that when God, with full power to prevent perpetually in His hands, permits any volition to eventuate in the action desired by the volitioner, He sanctions the action, though not the volition, and assumes the responsibility of it. "There is no cause for us to try to prove an alibi for the Omnipresent. God does not shirk the responsibility for the universe." He does not simply permit the action, He appoints it; He does not merely allow, He orders; He does not only suffer, He sends; so that it comes to pass as He pleases, and promotes His glory.

He permits that which is really sin, the inward evil volition, in a very different sense from that in which He permits the outward action. His absolute autocratic power exerted on the one, the volition, would affect our free agency in a very different way from what it does when exerted on the other, the action, destroying free agency in the first place, but not in the second. Nor can we for a moment imagine God the direct, responsible author of a malicious or lustful volition, while we can imagine Him, without inconsistency, the direct author of any external action whatever, for mere actions have no moral character. It may be said, then, that God, in deciding, once for all, to permit sin, decided to do in His own special realm of matter whatsoever this deep unalterable fact of sin rendered necessary for carrying out His grand designs. Hence, in a loose sense, accommodated to the popular understanding, He permits the actions to which sin prompts, but in reality He Himself does whatever is made necessary by the disturbing hateful presence of rebellious wills.

Can we say, then, "All that is is right"? Not without explanation. The phrase has a truth in it, but is easily misunderstood. The whole scene of the world and human history is not the work of God alone, except in the sense that it is the best He could do with the materials at His disposal.

Sin having entered against His will, all that has followed is what that fact necessitates or occasions. All is right in our present circumstances, in view of the discipline needed, and the final adjustment of rewards and penalties. It may be said that sin, or the sinner, indirectly controls some events by compelling God to do far otherwise than He would if there were no sin. Satan and wicked men, by their evil courses, make it essential for God to punish them, but He keeps the rod and the reins in His own hands. Our volitions, those of men in general, are the occasions for special activities in the world, which activities, causally considered, are forms of the divine agency.

Events, then, as they meet us from day to day, embody the mind or purpose of God in its present phase, so to speak; not as it was in the beginning, nor as it will be hereafter. Heaven before the fall of Lucifer, expresses His primal or absolute mind—that which He desires and in which He delights, that which meets His approval and sympathy; earth expresses His present or relative mind, that which is best under the circumstances, that to which He has been forced by the conditions beyond His control, the perverse volitions of free agents independent in their choices. So that the events of life may be said to accord with His relative and actual, though not with His abso-

lute, ideal will. They represent His plans in their present stage of development, but not at all as they will be when His efforts at the renovation of the world are crowned with success. Still they are His plans, and the events are more truly directly His than they are anybody else's. Neither evil men nor evil spirits have any power to determine or direct the actual course of occurrences, though they may defy omnipotence in the sphere of their wills, and by the sin there perpetrated greatly influence the actions of God. There is a very important difference, it seems to us, between the sinner's directly controlling events himself and his so willing that God deems it best, under the circumstances, to act in such a way. The outward act, to be sure, may often be the same, but the immediate power behind it is very different, and hence the feelings with which we can contemplate the transaction will also be very different. The trust and comfort and Joy which fill the devout heart as it is thus brought into immediate contact at all points with its Maker, able to see His loving hand in all, are unspeakably precious, and very different from the emotions that would arise if the vision had to be confined to human or diabolical agency. We may say that God permits the evil volitions of men, and all the accruing ills of the universe, because He created men knowing what they would do, and determined to create

notwithstanding the evil that would result, because foreseeing that greater good would in the end be wrought out, and that a world containing sin would be better than no world at all, or a world of mere machines without free agency. Sin was permitted, we may say, because to make a universe in such a way as to prevent it, would have necessitated the rejection of a greater good. For the same reason probably sinful beings are continued in existence. But in no other way than this can God be said even to permit or suffer that which is really their sin, namely, the perverse rebellious choices of their free wills.

Still another explanation may perhaps relieve the mind of some. It has reference to our own active duties. The grandest truth can be easily turned into the most mischievous lie if it be taken in the wrong spirit, or by the wrong handle, and used in a perverse way. Antinomianism ever stands over against the truth of God's sovereignty, and seeks to find in it some excuse for its own license, some justification for its own wickedness. Hence it must be carefully remembered that we are held to the strictest accountability for every sinful volition, including every wilful omission of duty. The fact that God sanctions the outward act can in no way be pleaded in extenuation of our guilt for yielding to the evil passion which is ours alone. As well might Satan plead

God's sanction for his malice and pride because God does not see fit to blot him out of existence. Whatever God may think best to do or not to do with our limbs, which are under His control, does not affect at all our sole responsibility for the wicked tempers which we cherish and the free consent which we have given to temptation. Hence the truth of God's responsibility for external acts, or, in other words, His absolute sovereignty in the realm of matter, when used as a shield against oppression, a refuge from the storm of persecution, is a sound, sufficient defence, an unfailing solace; but if it should be employed as a sword or a bludgeon by the persecutor or other evil-doer it would be a twisting of the truth into falsity, and a wresting of it to his own destruction, because for him the intention is the essential thing whereby he will be tried, and whereby he should try himself.

It will thus be seen that the chief value of the doctrine lies in enabling us to endure, not to do. It has a much more practical connection with our receptivity than with our activity. The latter will not be essentially affected by it. For, while force or physical action is never absolutely at the bidding of human volition, never under the supreme control of our will; so that it invariably and necessarily follows the course man orders, yet, as a matter of fact, it ordinarily does so. Man

has no power to do (outwardly) just as he pleases in spite of God, but this freedom of external action is not obstructed or circumscribed except in special cases, when there is no other way open to God by which He can carry out His plans. But since this way is always in His power as a final resort, it is proper to say that the ultimate authoritative control and responsibility is His alone. And the external act is man's, properly speaking, only in the sense that his volition gave occasion for the putting forth of this particular power by God at this particular time and place. It is a prearranged harmony, even as in the case of prayer, where my special petitioning gives the occasion for the special putting forth of God's power in some ways that would not otherwise be put forth, though the power is still God's, not mine.

It will also be seen, we trust, that it would be a very sad mistake, and a most improper perversion of this doctrine, to suppose that it encouraged inactivity, or excused laziness. God is certainly in all events, so that they manifest His present purpose, but we, who are bound to be "workers together with Him," have no right to consider anything an *event* until we have done our very best to make it what it should be. The inevitable, that which is the result of our utmost exertions in the right cause, is the only thing

which we are justified in regarding as the expressed will of God. Cheerful acquiescence with that is a manifest duty and a blessed privilege. But until an event is practically inevitable (the determining of which point must be left to each man's best judgment) no one has any business to bring God's sovereignty into the question, or to plead divine responsibility as a bar to his own faithful exertions.

Is it well to speak of special providences? Not unless we understand just what we mean by it. It is certainly much better to see and say that *all* events are a *chain* of providences. The special providence theory, as generally held, utterly breaks down on close examination. If we mean, indeed, by special providence that some part of God's dealings or leadings, on account of peculiar circumstances, especially impressed us—very well. But it is not well if we forget that those events in our lives which do not strike us in so marked a manner are, nevertheless, just as much providences, just as much sent or directed by the good hand of God. In fact, we should hold with great firmness, in the face of the common thought to the contrary, and in spite of all appearances, the truth that everything which comes to us without a single exception is a providence, a Godsend. He who attempts to pick and choose among the events of life, assigning this to providence and

that to some other source, whether chance or fate or men or devils, attempts an impossibility, misses the meaning of the divine word, destroys the value of the promises, and dethrones Deity.

As to the divine word in the matter we have hitherto said very little, but it is not because there is any poverty of passages to be quoted. Just the contrary. There are very, very many. In giving now a small selection of them it must be understood that there are multitudes of others which will occur to those familiar with the Scriptures. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. xix. 6). "Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Ps. CXV. 3). "Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did He, in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places" (Ps. CXXXV. 6). "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Dan. IV. 25). No doctrine will meet the demands of these and similar texts affirming God's sovereignty in His creation, which rules out from the domain of providence even the smallest occurrences, though they be no larger or more important than the taking of a single step or the falling of a sparrow, or the plucking of one silken hair from an infant's head.

In Prov. XVI. 1, 9, 33; XIX. 21; XX. 24, we have these words: "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from

Jehovah" (A. R. V.) "A man's heart deviseth his way but Jehovah directeth his steps." "The lot is cast unto the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of Jehovah." "There are many devices in a man's heart, but the counsel of Jehovah that shall stand." "A man's goings are of Jehovah; how, then, can man understand his way?" In other words, the devices, intentions, plans, volitions of men are purely in their own control. They constitute character; they secure responsibility; but the words, the goings, the steps, the outward actions, strictly conform to the "counsel of the Lord," for thus only can He rule in the earth.

Said the Lord Jesus to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above" (John, XIX. 11). Pilate thought he had much power, just as wicked rulers think now that they can proceed as they like against the good; but they are every moment in God's almighty hand, and can do only that which is "given" them to do.

The wise words of the pious Job (I. 21, 22, II. 10) express the same deep truth: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly." "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his

lips." How many in these days, not so well instructed as the old Arabian Sheikh, would say it was charging God foolishly to ascribe to Him the evil, that is, the pain, as well as the pleasure of life, and to assert that He, and not the devil, or bad men, took away their property or friends.

To the same purport are the words of the Psalmist (Ps. LXXVI. 10): "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (or "gird upon thee," R. V.). By "wrath" here is clearly meant not the inward passion of the heart, for that angry passion never praises God, but the outward results of that passion. Those results God invariably turns to the furtherance of His own purposes; and when He has no purpose to be served in the case, He "restrains" the wrath, that is, prevents its outward manifestation, and the angry man finds all the avenues through which he seeks to vent his spite unaccountably shut against him.

Well illustrating this passage are the expressions used in Acts II. 23, IV. 27, 28, XIII. 29, concerning the crucifixion of Jesus, where the actions springing from the wrath of man were not restrained because the glory of God was to be subserved by them. "Him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay." "For of a truth against thy holy servant

Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained to come to pass." "And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb."

In line with these others, and explained on the same principles, are the famous passages in Amos (III. 6): "Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it"; and in Isaiah (XIV. 7), "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." Darkness and death are as truly providential as light and life. And, finally, St. Paul seems to clearly recognize our doctrine in 1 Cor. VI. 18, where he says, "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body," that is, every sin is really committed by the soul through the will, apart from the body, the body being only the instrument, not the agent. As the poet Herrick says,

"The body sins not: 'tis the will  
That makes the action good or ill."

We hope the reader has now become fully convinced that revelation, reason, and religion are united in behalf of this theory of divine providence which has so very close a connection with

the life ecstatic. We hope he will conclude that his doubts and questionings have all been fairly answered, and that if at any points there still seems to be mystery that mystery is only the necessary accompaniment of such deep matters, and he need pay it no heed, but fearlessly accept the doctrine to his very great comfort. There is no other which will afford him so much support. This theory fully secures the freedom needful for personal accountability without interfering with the true prerogatives and powers of the Almighty, preserves the Creator from responsibility for sin without imperiling or shattering His control of the universe, makes a place for divine sovereignty and human sovereignty as well. It draws the dividing line where the immaterial and the material in man come together, making God sovereign in the realm of matter including the bodies of men and other animals, while man is sovereign in the realm of his own volitions. It makes all physical force in the last analysis simply and solely God's, and makes sin reside in the will alone, which is beyond the reach of God's control by the conditions of its creation. Combining these two thoughts we have a consistent and sufficient explanation of how the Creator can govern the world without disturbing the moral responsibility of His creatures. In this way we obtain a firm foundation for intelligent faith in God's promises

without imperilling our conceptions of the perfect holiness of His character. In this way we secure scope for the freedom of the created will without elevating either man or devil into a power able to defeat God's purposes in the world or mock at His authority. For as soon as men's devices take form in word or deed they become the common property of the providence of God who will have them develop and pass on to the contemplated end of the responsible deviser, or divert them to other ends, or restrain them in part or in whole, as may best subserve the purposes of His moral government. Hence when any agency good or bad reaches us it is an expression of God's will concerning us; something for us to learn, enjoy, do or suffer.

We know of no other consistent workable theory. This one sets forth better than any other, we believe, the respective relation of God, Satan, and man to the existence of the sins and miseries that infest the world, marking out clearly the different degrees of power they exercise. By making God great it gives the believing soul a sure ground of trust and peace; by assuming and conserving the freedom of the human will it preserves responsibility. We are saved from all fear or concern about wicked men or wicked angels. We are saved, too from trouble at what seem the blunders and mistakes of good men, whether our

own or other people's. We feel sure that even in them there is a purpose and a meaning; that there is a loving heart behind them, and a strong controlling hand upon them; they are of the "all things" that work together for our good, having uses of admonition, correcting our pride, and delivering us from worse evils than those they bring. The pain which comes in punishment for our careless infraction of some wise law is disciplinary and beneficent, and we can find cause for praising him who sends it. We shall embrace cordially that most wholesome and inspiring truth that "every man's life is a plan of God," and we shall eagerly give our strength to co-operating with the development of God's plan concerning us, rejoicing in the sacrifices and sufferings made necessary by so high and so worthy an end. Our trust will be no half-trust, a meaningless mockery, sure to fail when most needed, but a trust of the genuine thorough-going sort, out from which naturally, inevitably springs the calm and pleasant feeling that nothing can ever come to us which is not in harmony with that perfect will infinitely holy, wise and good; a trust which will sweep our faces clean of even the vaguest anticipation of anything not to be desired.



## SHOUTINGS IN VERSE.

## A LITTLE BIRD I AM.

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A little bird I am,  
Shut from the fields of air;  
And in my cage I sit and sing  
To Him who placed me there,—  
Well pleased a prisoner to be,  
Because, my God, it pleases Thee.

Nought have I else to do:  
I sing the whole day long;  
And He whom most I love to please  
Doth listen to my song.  
He caught and bound my wandering wing,  
But still He bends to hear me sing.

My cage confines me round;  
Abroad I cannot fly;  
But, though my wing is closely bound,  
My heart's at liberty.  
My prison walls cannot control  
The flight, the freedom of the soul.

Oh, it is good to soar  
These bolts and bars above,  
To Him whose purpose I adore,  
Whose providence I love;  
And in Thy mighty will to find  
The joy, the freedom, of the mind.

MADAME GUYON.

## SHOUTINGS IN VERSE.

Among the means that multitudes have found very helpful in the cultivation of the joyful life are the "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" that God has put it into the heart of gifted men and women to write. Whoever is skilled in the science of saintliness, and proficient in the art of godly living, knows how much benefit oftentimes comes from this source. A single verse, or even line, will frequently lift the soul out of incipient doubt and scatter clustering mists that would otherwise have gathered into depressing clouds. A hymn is a wing by which we soar above earthly cares and toils into a purer air and a clearer sunshine. And when the hymn is married to a melody that proves its fitting mate we have two wings with which to speed our flight heavenward. Lofty communion comes readily to him who ever and anon breaks forth into singing. There are heights which cannot so well be gained in any other way. The happy heart says, Let us praise, as naturally as the troubled heart says, Let us pray. And our happiness is increased and stimulated by the very process of giving it expression.

L OF C.

Emotion grows as it gains utterance. So much so is this the case that it is even worth while sometimes to force the flow at first, if it be necessary, thus availing ourselves of the truth that songs on the lips tend to work their way down into the heart. What a rich treasure-house has the church of God in its hymnology!

Into this general subject we must not further enter, but a book like the present would hardly be complete without one chapter of suitable extracts from those poets and hymn-writers who have put into verse the thoughts and ideas which we are trying, in prose, to impress upon the reader. These verses are every way fit for being committed to memory. They can and should be repeated very often, and said over and over, at odd moments, when travelling or lying wakeful at night, and made the theme of prolonged meditation. They are very concentrated, and so their meaning can be enlarged upon almost without limit, developed in other language, and applied to every variety of conditions or circumstances. They are pithy, sententious, strong, compact and beautiful, appealing to the esthetic faculties, as well as to the ethical, carrying a large freight of feeling in a small vehicle of words. He is wise, we think, who makes a collection of the lines that most please and help him, filling his memory with their melodious syllables, and strengthening his

purpose by the power which they contain and convey.

The subject of Providence, which has recently occupied us, has been very extensively dealt with by the poets, and an entire volume could easily be filled with their words about it. Well known are the grand hymns of William Cowper, "God moves in a mysterious way," of Martin Luther, "A mighty fortress is our God," and of Joseph Addison, "The Lord my pasture shall prepare." Many have put into flowing metres the wonderful Twenty-third Psalm. Many have essayed to give utterance to the confidence which one who fully believes reposes in the object of his steadfast and well-grounded faith. Few have done better at it than Charles Wesley. The following hymn, not so fine in poetic style as some that he wrote, deserves to be better known to the general Christian public:

"Away, my needless fears,  
.. And doubts no longer mine:  
A ray of heavenly light appears,  
A messenger divine.

Thrice comfortable hope,  
That calms my troubled breast;  
My Father's hand prepares the cup,  
And what He wills is best.

If what I wish is good,  
And suits the will divine,  
By earth and hell in vain withstood.  
I know it shall be mine.

Still let them counsel take  
To frustrate His decree;  
They cannot keep a blessing back,  
By Heaven designed for me.

Here then I doubt no more,  
But in His pleasure rest,  
Whose wisdom, love, and truth, and power,  
Engage to make me blest."

What form of words could more fully express the doctrine which we have endeavored to set forth in the previous pages? If there is a decree of God for my good that cannot be frustrated by any human counsel, that earth and hell combined cannot bring to naught, if the ample blessings which heaven has allotted me cannot be kept back by any sort of instrumentality, then indeed my fears are needless, my doubts an impertinence, and my untroubled breast may well lean upon His love in exceeding great comfort and perfect, perpetual peace.

Very similar to the above, and of an equally positive faith, is a hymn by the Rev. Henry Francis Lyte, who wrote also, "Abide with me,

fast falls the evening tide," "Jesus, I my cross have taken," and many others very dear to the Christian church. Not so well known, but altogether worthy of a place in any smallest collection of hymns calculated to voice and vitalize completest confidence in the Saviour, is the following:

"My spirit on Thy care,  
Blest Saviour, I recline;  
Thou wilt not leave me to despair,  
For Thou art Love divine.

In Thee I place my trust,  
On Thee I calmly rest;  
I know Thee good, I know Thee just,  
And count Thy choice the best.

Whate'er events betide,  
Thy will they all perform:  
Safe in Thy breast my head I hide,  
Nor fear the coming storm.

Let good or ill befall,  
It must be good for me;  
Secure of having Thee in all,  
Of having all in Thee."

No one more signally than Madame Guyon, by her great sufferings for conscience sake so divinely borne, as well as by her marked gifts and profound experience, has earned a right to be lis-

tened to on this subject. We must deny ourselves the privilege of giving the whole of any of her numerous hymns. They are easy of access. Especially fine is one, written during her long years of severe imprisonment in the Bastile, beginning, "A little bird I am," a part of which we have put at the beginning of this chapter. Another, but little inferior, has for its first double stanza this:

"My Lord, how full of sweet content,  
I pass my years of banishment.  
Where'er I dwell, I dwell with Thee,  
In Heaven, in earth, or on the sea.  
To me remains nor place nor time;  
My country is in every clime;  
I can be calm and free from care  
On any shore, since God is there."

Of like import are three other stanzas from other hymns by the same author, not very familiar, which our readers will be glad to add to any collection which they may make of such stimulating utterances:

"To me 'tis equal whether Love ordain  
My life or death, appoint me pain or ease;  
My soul perceives no real ill in pain,  
In ease or health no real good she sees."

"'Tis that which makes my treasure,  
'Tis that which brings my gain:

Converting woe to pleasure,  
And reaping joy from pain.  
O 'tis enough whate'er befall  
To know that God is all in all."

"In vain they smite me. Men but do  
What God permits with different view.  
To outward sight they hold the rod,  
But faith proclaims it all of God."

With similar clearness and boldness of testimony, to be as widely as possible imitated—Oh, that it might be universally adopted—speak out others who say,

"All's alike to me so I  
In my Lord may live and die."

"I ask no more in good or ill,  
But union with Thy holy will."

"All my requests are lost in one,  
Father, Thy only will be done."

"Whatsoe'er our lot may be,  
Calmly in this thought we'll rest.  
Could we see as Thou dost see,  
We should choose it as the best."

"With patient course Thy path of duty run,  
God nothing does or suffers to be done,  
But Thou wouldest do the same if thou couldst see  
The end of all events as well as He."

Could anything be more wholesome, more productive of exaltation and exultation, than the absorption of such sentiments as these? When they have become the instinctive, axiomatic utterance of the soul in every contingency and emergency, not merely the final result after struggle, but the spontaneous expression of unforced feeling in the face of whatever so-called calamity or affliction it may please the Lord to send, then, indeed, one has good reason to believe that he has reached the condition of union with God where the purifying processes are practically complete; then he is prepared to shout victory all along the line; then he does not so much submit his pleasure to the will of God as find his pleasure in the will of God—a very different thing. It will have long since been manifest that we regard a correct attitude toward the will of God as being the key to the situation, as the point to be watched with utmost care, the place to put the emphasis, the test of real progress. Feelings are secondary to volitions, and only important as they lead up to volitions or form a part of them. When we can say "Yes" to God with our whole heart and mind and strength, under all circumstances, we have arrived. When that which we render is not simply a cold obedience to the bidding of our King under the compulsion of a superior power, but a warm welcome to the wish of our best

Friend, a welcome into which the whole soul is poured with adoring love and passionate, affectionate self-bestowment, then God and we have become one in a way that justifies and exemplifies the startling words of Jesus—"Even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us" (John XVII. 20); "I know mine own and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father" (John X. 14).

Something of all this we tried to express rhythmically in a hymn called "The Will Divine," printed in some of the religious papers a while ago. It seems fitting to insert it here as a legitimate portion of this chapter:

Thy Will, O God, is joy to me,  
A gladsome thing;  
For in it naught but love I see,  
Whate'er it bring.

No bed of pain, no rack of woe—  
Thy Will is good;  
A glory wheresoe'er I go,  
My daily food.

Within the circle of Thy Will  
All things abide;  
So I, exulting, find no ill  
Where Thou dost guide.

In that resplendent Will of Thine  
I calmly rest;  
Triumphantly I make it mine,  
And count it best.

To doubt and gloom and care and fear  
I yield no jot;  
Thy choice I choose, with soul sincere,  
Thrice happy lot!

In all the small events that fall  
From day to day.  
I mark Thy hand, I hear Thy call,  
And swift obey.

I walk by faith, not sense or sight,  
Calm faith in Thee;  
My peace endures, my way is bright,  
My heart is free.

Unfaltering trust, complete content,  
The days ensphere.  
Each meal becomes a sacrament,  
And heaven is here.

Whoever studies this testimony will find that if he is to adopt it for his own he will have to separate himself fundamentally and finally from certain habits and opinions, certain modes of thought and speech which prevail with the vast majority of Christian people. They do not count God's will always best, gladsome, resplendent, a thing to glory in, except so far as it falls in

with their desires and views, in which case evidently it is not the will itself that they adore. It is not with them, as it was with the Master, a "daily food"—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me" (John IV. 34)—their source of strength and happiness. It is often a "bed of pain" on which they lie because they cannot help it, with many inward, if not outward, groanings and scarcely suppressed complainings that it is very, very hard. There is but little triumph in their thought or word; there is much "doubt and gloom and care and fear"; their peace does not always endure in the period of trial, their way is not always one of sunshine, nor their heart free from burden. They do not see God's hand in everything, however minute, nor feel that the circle of the will that takes them in covers also whatever exists, without exception, and that the strong pavilion in which they spend their days is a veritable piece of heaven, so perfect is their courage and content. Whoever can enter fully into the whole meaning of this hymn will be walking very close to Christ, and will have little more to do than to watch against unconscious, undiscerned departures from its standard, and to see that whatever further light is given on any of its positions is promptly followed.

There is an older hymn with substantially the same teaching, differently phrased and covering

some points not touched in the briefer one just given, a hymn written by the gifted Christian poet, Frederick William Faber, more than half a century ago, and deservedly held dear ever since by a wide circle of devout hearts. This chapter would not be complete without the presence of this wonderfully beautiful, comprehensive and suggestive effusion of a muse whose inspiration has been everywhere recognized.

I worship thee, sweet Will of God!  
And all Thy ways adore,  
And every day I live, I seem  
To love Thee more and more.

Thou wert the end, the blessed rule  
Of our Saviour's toils and tears;  
Thou wert the passion of His heart  
Those three and thirty years.

And He hath breathed into my soul  
A special love of Thee,  
A love to lose my will in His,  
And by that loss be free.

I love to kiss each print where Thou  
Hast set Thine unseen feet;  
I cannot fear Thee, blessed Will!  
Thine empire is so sweet.

When obstacles and trials seem  
Like prison walls to be,  
I do the little I can do,  
And leave the rest to Thee.

I know not what it is to doubt;  
My heart is ever gay;  
I run no risk, for come what will  
Thou always hast Thy way.

I have no cares, O blessed Will!  
For all my care are Thine;  
I live in triumph, Lord, for Thou  
Hast made Thy triumphs mine.

And when it seems no chance or change  
From grief can set me free,  
Hope finds its strength in helplessness,  
And gaily waits on Thee.

Man's weakness waiting upon God  
Its end can never miss,  
For man on earth no work can do  
More angel-like than this.

Ride on, ride on triumphantly,  
Thou glorious Will! ride on;  
Faith's pilgrim sons behind Thee take  
The road that Thou hast gone.

He always wins who sides with God,  
To him no chance is lost;  
God's will is sweetest to him when  
It triumphs at his cost.

Ill that He blesses is our good,  
And unblest good is ill;  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet Will!

Comment on these burning words seems hardly called for, unless it be to say that there is a wealth of meaning in them which nothing but prolonged meditation can at all uncover. They strike a note so high and true that only the elect few can unhesitatingly sound it; they set forth a creed so uncompromising that the number of those who can unfalteringly write their names at the bottom of it is not, and perhaps never will be, large. But it is invaluable as a standard. Many who must confess their present inability to stand on its breezy, heaven-lit heights fully accept it as a privilege and duty to constantly strive toward it, and cherish the hope of one day reaching this elevation. It is not a small thing so to do, to prove to the utmost what is possible to us if we form a prefect partnership as to cares and triumphs with the Lord Almighty, to learn in the largest degree the lesson of absolute acquiescence, the sweetness of complete obedience, the secret of true freedom, the joy of full fidelity, the supreme gain of unselfish loss. Verily this is a very great thing. Surely these words contain one of the best, most felicitous descriptions ever written of the life hid with Christ in God, the life fair and fragrant in the rarest degree, the life that walks with a conquering tread, free from all fear whether of tongues or tempests, on fire with love, anchored in peace, possessing

the golden gates of gladness, failure left forever behind, disappointment defeated and destroyed, paradise enjoyed. Let us all fix our steadfast enraptured gaze on this lofty ideal and press rapidly on with all our powers toward its completest realization.



## A CLUSTER OF WITNESSES.

## RABIA

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Rabia, sick upon her bed  
By two saints was visited,  
Holy Malik, Hasan wise,  
Men of mark in Moslem eyes.  
Hassan said, "Whose prayer is pure,  
Will God's chastisements endure."  
Malik from a deeper sense  
Uttered his experience;  
"He who loves his Master's choice  
Will in chastisements rejoice."  
Rabia saw some selfish will  
In their maxims lingering still,  
And replied, "O men of grace,  
He who sees his Master's face  
Will not in his prayer recall  
That he is chastised at all."

## A CLUSTER OF WITNESSES.

In our endeavors to establish an absolutely immovable foundation for the deep joy of the genuinely Christian heart, so that the man who thinks, as well as the man who feels, may fully share it, so that not only the simple-minded soul who reads nothing but his Bible, but also he of the schools and libraries, may equally rejoice in God, we have appealed to science and philosophy and reason, as well as to Scripture, citing a few representative names and texts which may stand for the many that might be quoted. It remains for us to call upon a goodly number of the most devout spirits of the church universal to add their testimony in corroboration of the truth on this all-important subject of divine providence. We find, as might have been expected, that the men who have made Christ-likeness, or a close walking with God, their special study and practice for a long time and with the greatest success, have usually accepted as the only consistent, workable doctrine of providence, or the Christian life, the main ideas which we have been trying to set forth, namely, that man's

freedom is wholly internal, where alone his sin and responsibility abide, while God is sovereign over all the external acts and events that take place in consequence of human volitions. As soon as the execution of the determination is attempted the creature steps outside of his own independent and responsible sphere and enters the realm of God's providence where He assumes control.

We say that this theory by which alone the dividing line between divine and human responsibility can be clearly drawn, has commended itself, for its symmetry and beauty, its simplicity and strength, to those profoundly religious spirits who have sought above all else for some place where perfect rest and perfect activity can be combined, some place where they could have all the unquestionable benefits of fatalism without the least touch of its benumbing, paralyzing evils. Such men have rejoiced over the discovery as those finding great spoil, and have not hesitated to declare it in various forms, with much reiteration. They have felt, as we, too, have done, that the very highest forms of devotion can scarcely flourish without being sustained by the feeling that the divine Friend is present and active in all that takes place, working continually for our good, guarding our every interest, guiding our every step, and revealing Himself to the

watchful eye in every smallest occurrence of life. And, feeling this, they have become very strongly attached to a doctrine that so simply and securely provides for precisely this thing. Without further introduction, we proceed to give a small selection, all that our space seems to warrant, from the much that has been written on this theme by the best teachers and exemplifiers of the spiritual life.

Thomas á Kempis (1380-1471) in his *Imitation of Christ*, which ranks first among uninspired volumes for diffusion, popularity, and usefulness, says, "O Lord God, holy Father, be Thou blessed now and forever, for whatever Thou willest is done, and all that Thou willest is good." "The righteous should never be moved by whatever befalls him, knowing that it comes from the hand of God, and is to promote the important business of our redemption. Without God nothing is done upon the face of the earth." "Perfection consists in offering up thyself with thy whole heart to the will of God; never seeking thine own will, either in small or great respects; but with an equal mind weighing all events in the balance of the sanctuary, and receiving both prosperity and adversity with continual thanksgiving." "Lord I will freely suffer for Thy sake whatever affliction Thou permittest to come upon me; I will indifferently receive from Thee sweet

and bitter, joy and sorrow, good and evil. For all that befalleth me I will thank the love that prompts the gift, and reverence the hand that confers it." "No evil is permitted to befall thee but what may be made productive of a much greater good." "The truly patient man, whatever be the adversity that befalls him, however often it is renewed or by whomsoever it is administered, receives all with thankfulness as from the hand of God, and esteems it great gain."

Francis of Sales, Bishop of Geneva, as lovable and nearly perfect a man as ever lived, issued in 1608 his *Introduction to a Devout Life*, a manual of devotion from which vast multitudes have drawn sweetest nourishment. In it we find these words, "Everything which occurs in the universe, except sin, happens by the will of God; no one can prevent its accomplishment, and it is known by the effect it produces. When events occur we judge unhesitatingly that God has willed and regulated them." "Let us bless and thank God on all occasions, saying, I do not wish for anything, O my God; I do not even desire to know what may befall me; the power of willing and choosing belongs to Thee; I reserve to myself only that of blessing Thee for whatever Thou hast ordained. Souls thus united to God have reached the highest degree of perfection which can be attained in this life." "We

practice the highest perfection of love when we not only receive afflictions with patience and resignation, but even cherish and delight in them on account of the will of God from which they proceed." "For you there is nothing else in the world but God and yourself. Often reflect that all we do derives its true value from the conformity which we have to the will of God; so that in eating and drinking if I do it because it is the will of God that I do it I am more pleasing to God than if I suffered death without that intention." "Take care to make yourself daily more pure in heart; this purity consists in weighing everything in the balance of the sanctuary, which is nothing else than the will of God."

Alphonsus Rodriguez, author of one of the very best works on *Christian Perfection* which has ever seen the light, and which was first published at Seville in 1614, and soon translated into all the languages of Europe, said, "Observe that in every sin we commit there are two things. The one is the motion or exterior act, the other the irregularity of the will by which we transgress what the commandments of God prescribe. God is the cause and author of the first; man only is the cause and author of the second." "There can nothing happen in this world but by the order and will of God. Sin excepted, all other things, as sufferings, pains and afflictions,

happen by the order and will of God. This is a truth not to be called in question; for, though all these things proceed from second causes, it is certain that there is nothing done throughout the universe but by the command and will of one sovereign Master who orders and governs all.” “Those who have attained a perfect conformity to the divine will and who place their own contentment in that of God never suffer themselves to be disquieted at the changes and accidents of this life. Their will is so fully subjected to that of God that the very assurance they have that all things come as sent by Him, and that His holy will is accomplished in whatever adversity happens to them, makes them, by preferring His will to their own, look upon all their tribulations and sufferings as so many joys, and all their griefs and sorrows as so much sweet-ness and consolation. Hence it is that nothing can trouble them; for as trouble can come only from crosses, misfortunes and affronts, and as these, through respect for the hand which sends them are received by them as so many favors, it follows that there is nothing which can change or diminish the peace and tranquillity of their soul. Each day of their life is a day of jubilee and exultation. Having attained a perfect conformity to the divine will, they meet everywhere sources of content and satisfaction.” “It is cer-

tain if you never desire anything but what God desires you will always attain the object of your desires, because God's holy will can never fail of being entirely performed. How happy we when we covet nothing but what God pleases. And how happy, not only because our own will is accomplished, but because we see the will of God, whom we love, accomplished in us and in all things."

The seraphic Fénelon (1651-1715), who was not only a saint but also a scholar and a genius, and whose thirst for perfection has probably never been surpassed, was a voluminous writer and an incomparable teacher. Among many other things bearing on our topic, he wrote, "No matter what cross may overwhelm the true child of God he wills everything that happens, and would not have anything removed which his Father appoints; the more he loves God, the more is he filled with content; and the most stringent perfection, far from being a burden, only renders his yoke the lighter." "True virtue and pure love reside in the will alone. The important question is, not how much you enjoy religion, but whether you will whatever God wills." "Nothing can happen contrary to the will of God, and we find in His good pleasure an inexhaustible source of peace and consolation. The interior life is the beginning of the blessed

peace of the saints who eternally cry, Amen, Amen. We adore, we praise, we bless God in everything; we see Him incessantly, and in all things His paternal hand is the sole object of our contemplation. There are no longer any evils; for even the most terrible that can come upon us work together for our good. Can the suffering that God designs to purify us and make us worthy of Himself be called an evil?" "The peace of the soul consists in an absolute resignation to the will of God. The pain we suffer from so many occurrences arises from the fact that we are not entirely abandoned to God in everything that happens."

The *Theologica Germanica*, one of Luther's main helpers in learning the true way, and a favorite handbook of devotion in Germany down to the present day, a truly golden treatise, has this, "In truth, nothing is contrary to God; no creature nor creature's work, nor anything that we can name nor think of, is contrary to God or displeasing to Him, but only disobedience and the disobedient man. In short, all that is well-pleasing and good in God's eyes, saving only the disobedient man." "The man who is truly godlike complaineth of nothing, but of sin only. And sin is simply to desire or will anything otherwise than the one perfect good and the one eternal will, or to wish to have a will of one's

own. Sin is to will, desire, or love otherwise than as God doth. Things do not thus will, desire, or love; therefore things are not evil; all things are good."

Another book of almost equal fame and value is *The Spiritual Combat*, written by Lorenzo Scupoli (1530-1610) and spread abroad in fifty editions, in many languages, while the author yet lived. Many hundred editions have perpetuated its usefulness since. It was the master of Francis of Sales, and has been of multitudes more. We find there these words, "Everything which befalls us comes from God for our good, and we may profit by it. And though some of these (such as our own failings or those of others) cannot be said to be of God who willeth not sin, yet are they from Him, in that He permits them, and though able to hinder them hinders them not." "In all things make it a general rule to keep thy wishes so far removed from every other object that they may aim simply and solely at its true and only end, that is, the will of God. For in this way will they be well ordered and righteous; and thou, in any contrary event whatsoever, wilt be not only calm but contented; for, as nothing can happen without the supreme will, thou, by willing the same, wilt come at all times both to will and to have all that happens, and all that Thou desirest."

"Consider that all these disquieting things, and such like evils, are not real evils, though outwardly they seem so, nor can they rob us of any real good, but are all ordered or permitted by God for righteous ends."

Turning to some among the many moderns whose example, as well as words, have been so powerful in molding the sentiment and opinion of great churches, we delight to contemplate John Wesley, who was cheerful under all circumstances, never low-spirited, never disquieted. Often quoted have been his well known words, "I dare no more fret than curse and swear." "By the grace of God, I never fret, I repine at nothing, I am discontented with nothing. I see God sitting upon His throne and ruling all things well. Ten thousand cares of various kinds are no more weight or burden to my mind than ten thousand hairs are to my head." "We know that all things are ordered by unerring wisdom and are given us exactly at the right time and in due number, weight and measure." "If we see God in all things and do all for Him, then all things are easy."

Wesley's close companion and designated successor, John Fletcher, was one of those who had fully learned how to rejoice evermore and in everything give thanks, beholding God's hand in all events, without the least exception. He said,

"All is well, for He that doeth all things well rules and overrules all. This world has become to me a world of love. I kiss the rod which smites me. I adore the Providence which lays me aside." Among his favorite rules were these: "Receive afflictions as the best guides to perfection." "Rejoice always in the will of God." "Remember always the presence of God." "Do not surrender thyself to any joy." "Renounce thyself in all that can hinder thy union with God." He died as he lived, and the triumphant words from his deathbed were in no way different from those which most naturally expressed his feelings during his entire career. They were these: "God is love. It fills my heart every moment. Shout, shout aloud. I want a gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth."

Coming to this side of the Atlantic, and to a period somewhat nearer our own time, we may well take Edward Payson (1783-1827) as a model of modern sanctity. We cull from among his utterances the following, which cannot be too often pondered, "O, what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will! Since I have lost my will I have found happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desires but that God's will may be accomplished." "God has been cutting off one source of enjoyment after another, till I find that I can do

without them all, and yet enjoy more happiness than ever in my life before." "Christians might avoid much trouble and inconvenience if they would only believe what they profess, that God is able to make them happy without anything else. They imagine that if such a dear friend were to die, or such and such blessings were removed, they should be miserable; whereas God can make them a thousand times happier without them. To mention my own case: God has been depriving me of one blessing after another; but as every one was removed He has come in and filled up its place; and now when I am a cripple and not able to move, I am happier than ever I was in my life before, or ever expected to be; and if I had believed this twenty years ago I might have been spared much anxiety." "We shall never be happy until we acquiesce with perfect cheerfulness in all His decisions, and follow wherever He leads without a murmur." "I have suffered twenty times—yes, to speak within bounds—twenty times as much as I could in being burned at the stake, while my joy in God has so abounded as to render my sufferings not only tolerable but welcome. God is literally now my all in all. While He is present with me no event can diminish my happiness; and were the whole world at my feet trying to minister

to my comfort they could not add one drop to my cup."

Of a different class in outward things, but of the same sort inwardly, was Thomas Jonathan Jackson, a distinguished General in the Confederate army. His faith and trust led him to feel under all circumstances that nothing could happen to him but what was sent in wisdom and love by his heavenly Father. No text was more frequently on his lips than that which has been such a favorite with all God's chosen ones: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." He so ruled his life that he never inadvertently fell into the use of the common expressions always upon most people's lips, involving the wish that some event were different from what it was. To do so would, in his opinion, have been to arraign Providence. "Don't you wish it would stop raining?" might be the careless remark made to him after a week of wet weather. His smiling reply would invariably be, "Yes, if the Maker of the weather thinks it best." Every act of his life was religious. He spiritualized everything; he prayed without ceasing; he lived entirely and unreservedly to God's glory. No combination of earthly ills could mar his happiness. After his fatal wound at Chancellorsville, he said to a friend, "You see me severely wounded, but not depressed, not un-

happy. I believe it has been done according to God's holy will, and I acquiesce entirely in it. You may think it strange, but you never saw me more perfectly contented than I am to-day, for I am sure that my Heavenly Father designs this affliction for my good. I am perfectly satisfied that either in this life or in that which is to come I shall discover that which is now regarded as a calamity to be a blessing. I can wait until God in His own time shall make known to me the object He has in afflicting me. But why should I not rather rejoice in it as a blessing, and not look upon it as a calamity at all? If it were in my power to replace my arm I would not dare to do it unless I could know it was the will of my Father."

General Charles George Gordon, of England and China and the Soudan, was a twin in spirit with General Jackson. He had an unwavering trust, an absolute faith in God. His language was, "Either I must believe He does all things in mercy and love, or I must disbelieve in His existence; there is no half-way in this matter for me." "It is quite impossible that any one can be happy or even tranquil, unless he accepts the faith that God rules every little item in our daily lives, permitting the evil and turning it to our good." "Whatsoever happens is best; God directs all things, great and small, in infinite wis-

dom." "The whole of religion consists in looking to God as the true Ruler, and above the agents He uses; the flesh will always look to the agents." "I cannot wish things were different from what they are, for if I do so then I wish my will, not His, to be done." "In this life the position we occupy is as nothing; each is in his right place." "When you bow to the will of God, you die to this world."

To complete our round dozen of witnesses—six from the medieval age, and six from modern times—we summon Prof. Thomas C. Upham (1799-1872) whose *Interior Life*, *Life of Faith*, *Divine Union*, *Life of Madame Adorna*, *Life of Madame Guyon* and *Fénelon*, together with other similar precious volumes, have fed great multitudes. From his teeming pages we quote just a little, "Everything which takes place indicates, all things considered, the mind of God in that particular thing." "The man who lives in conformity with providence necessarily lives in conformity with God. It is only when we are in this position that we may be said to walk with God; and walking with God is union with God. To be in harmony with God's providence we must be in harmony with everything, not excepting the material world. There is no grass, no flower, no tree, no insect, no creeping thing, no singing bird, nothing which does not bring God with it,

and in such a manner that the thing which we behold becomes a clear and bright revelation of that which is invisible." "The event, painful as it is, and criminal as it is under some circumstances, is nevertheless a manifestation of God; and not of a God absent, but of a God present. And happy is the man that can receive this. To be out of harmony with these things, acts, and events which God in His providence has seen fit to array around us—that is to say, not to meet them in a humble, believing and thankful spirit—is to turn from God." "This important principle raises us at once above all subordinate creatures, and places us in the most intimate connection with God Himself. It makes the occurrences of every moment, to an important extent, a manifestation of God's will, and consequently, in every such occurrence it makes God Himself essentially present to us, brings God and our souls together." "A will perfectly coincident with the will of God is at the same time the natural result and the highest evidence of a sanctified heart. When the will in its personal or self-interested operation is entirely prostrated, so that we can say with the Saviour, 'Lo I come to do thy will,' then the wall of separation is taken away, and the soul may be said, through the open entrance to find a passage, as it were, into God Himself, and to become one with Him in a mys-

terious but holy and glorious union." "The man who is disturbed and impatient when events fall out differently from what he expected and anticipated, is not in the enjoyment of true spiritual freedom. In accordance with the idea of God's perfect sovereignty, the man of a religiously free spirit regards all events which take place, sin only excepted, as an expression under the existing circumstances, of the will of God. And such is his unity with the divine will that there is an immediate acquiescence in the event, whatever may be its nature, and however afflicting in its personal bearings. His mind has acquired, as it were, a divine flexibility, in virtue of which it accommodates itself with surprising ease and readiness to all the developments of Providence, whether prosperous or adverse."

Surely there is no need that we call on the many others who might easily be summoned. Some may think that even these testimonies are in a way superfluous, in that they only repeat with a variety of language what has been already said. Truly, this is so. Nevertheless, there is an added assurance which comes to us concerning any great doctrine when it is plainly seen that many minds of no small calibre in many centuries, after the most profound reflection and the most prolonged waiting upon God, have reached the same results, and have verified them as spiritually

profitable in their daily experience through long years of trial. The truth is thus seen to be no mere eccentricity or quiddity of some bold speculator or seeker after originality and novelty, but the well-considered, amply confirmed conclusion of great numbers who have sought with a single eye to hear God speak and do His bidding. Surely it is safe to follow such guides. What has helped them so much will be likely to help us. The unanimity of their utterance is a powerful argument. They were men of independent minds, living in different countries and centuries and churches, and yet they all speak the same thing. Why should we hesitate to accept their conjoint declaration, their complete agreement, as to how the highest and deepest, the most peaceful and joyful, of lives can be lived? There would seem no room to question the blessedness of it all. The only thing remaining is to join this band of the truly noble, resolved to be one of their number, since the way is certainly plain, and what God did for them he can do for us.

## A PRINCE WITH GOD.

## TRUST AND REST

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Fret not, poor soul; while doubt and fear  
    Disturb thy breast,  
The pitying angels who can see  
How vain thy wild regrets must be,  
    Say, Trust and Rest.

Plan not, nor scheme,—but calmly wait;  
    His choice is best.  
While blind and erring is thy sight,  
His wisdom sees and judges right,  
    So Trust and Rest.

Strive not, nor struggle; thy poor might  
    Can never wrest  
The meanest thing to serve thy will;  
All power is His alone: Be still,  
    And Trust and Rest.

Desire not: self-love is strong  
    Within thy breast;  
And yet He loves thee better still,  
So let Him do His loving Will,  
    And Trust and Rest.

What dost Thou fear? His wisdom reigns  
    Supreme confessed;  
His power is infinite; His love  
Thy deepest, fondest dreams above;  
    So Trust and Rest.

ADELAIDE A. PROCTOR.

## A PRINCE WITH GOD.

In the endeavor to set forth fully the life ecstatic I have made, in the previous chapter, a number of quotations from prominent saints in both ancient and comparatively modern times. I cite, in the present chapter, the example of one, intimately known to me for fully forty years, who has just passed away, feeling sure that it will help those who read this volume to comprehend mentally and apprehend practically the sort of character for which the book stands. We are so constituted that we are more deeply impressed by examples than by precepts. The concrete affects us more strongly than the abstract. We ask, Can these counsels that look so beautiful on paper be actualized in daily life, have they been so actualized? We are not satisfied until we see it, or are told authentically that it has been seen. We want the ideal brought down to the real. If the grace of God has been sufficient in others to enable them to walk in perpetual joy, to exult and skip and leap and bound for gladness in Jesus, to give thanks for all things, and rejoice evermore, as well as pray without ceasing, then

we attack the height ourselves with far more confidence and hopefulness.

It is for this reason that I prepared and sent out last year a volume entitled, *The Saintly Calling*, devoted entirely to this aspect of the subject. I gave compact sketches of nineteen men and women well worthy to be termed saints because they showed so plainly the characteristics, men and women to consort with whom, even through the cold pages of print, would arouse desires after the eminent goodness which they possessed, and would furnish no little instruction as to how the heights were reached. They were people who breathed the atmosphere of heaven, who had illuminated faces, whose sense of God was extremely vivid, whose devotion to the will divine was passionate, who keenly realized the presence of the infinite One, dealing directly with Him in all the events that met them, and glowing with love to Jesus. They were "God-intoxicated" men and women, with a marvelous sweetness and brightness about them, with unclouded faith, unfaltering trust, unruffled cheerfulness, and a sublime absorption in the highest ideals of duty. They beheld God's hand in everything, they triumphed in trials, had uninterrupted fellowship with the Father and the Son, suffered no occurrences to pass unimproved, possessed inward recollection at all times, made

personal religion their primary concern, were happy in poverty and pain, praising God for afflictions. They lived in habitual communion with the unseen world, their one business to please the Lord and to effect an ever increasing union with Christ, dead to the world, to nature, to self, and so remaining perpetually in the land of Beulah, "Peace" and "Victory" their habitual experience and expression. They saw nothing but the unbounded goodness of their Heavenly Father, even when their dearest hopes were blasted; their lives were a bliss to themselves and a blessing to others; they were entranced with "the music of the Will," clinging to no plans, running over with kindness, steeped in love, choosing always the higher path, with a deep enthusiasm for goodness and for the closest possible walk with God. They basked in the sunshine, and poured around them the light of a most gracious smile, defying any combination of earthly ills to rob them of their gladness. They spiritualized every thing, lived unreservedly for God's glory, were always contented with their lot, and more than contented. They belonged to the highest royalty of earth, the seraphic. They were on fire with love to Jesus and their fellow men, carrying the flame and flavor of their religion with them wherever they went, consumed with the zeal of God's work, overflowing

with Hallelujahs. What more likely than that the contemplation of such examples should arouse within us dormant longings, and inspire us with determinations after the highest holiness.

Since putting out the book above referred to I have sketched another of these characters, not so distinguished in the world of affairs, but fully ranking with them, I believe, in the eyes of the Lord. Every one who knew him would bear willing testimony that the life ecstatic was his daily portion; and so this brief biography finds fitting place in these pages. I esteemed him a prince with God, but he would scarcely have seemed a prince to the casual observer. Such a one, indeed, would perhaps, ignorantly or superciliously, have set him down as rather below than above the level of the ordinary Methodist minister. For he had no pulpit and no official position. After four years' occupancy of obscure appointments, owing to failure of health, he took, in 1846, a superannuated relation to the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and retained it till his decease in 1902. So he had but little standing in the eyes of men, very little of this world's goods, no earthly recognition in ecclesiastical or social circles. But he was, in the largest sense of the term, a prince with God, truly great in the eyes of the Lord, for he walked in the very closest intimacy with

Him for more than sixty years, and He used him as a means of widespread blessing. He was very highly appreciated by such as were conversant with his character and competent to estimate it.

Here are a few testimonies from those who knew him best: "Association with him has been the greatest blessing of my life." "No life was so separated from the earthly as his. In his presence I always felt the Christ-life, the God manifest in the flesh." "He lived for Jesus only, all those years; he was eminently one of the few real saints who live out all they teach." "No one could say too much in his praise; he was as near like the Master as any human being could be; he was ever courteous and had a most winning way; he never antagonized any one, but loved them into believing." "What a sweet, strong, loving walk it all was, every day and every way, set apart in the Divine will in all things for more than a half century; he lived in the atmosphere of victory, never doubting the success of what he attempted in His name; he lived to bless and be a blessing wherever the Lord placed him." "Life is richer and heaven is nearer and dearer to me because I came to know him."

His special work was helping people up the heights of Christian perfection, and guiding them in the maturer developments of divine grace. He

could not aid all, for many could not understand him. He was to them an Apocrypha, something concealed; for he was quite a mystic in his mental mood and form of expression. John Tauler and other such writers were among his small collection of books, and he would have been warmly welcomed among that choice band of exalted spirits called "the Friends of God," who, in the fourteenth century, filled Western Germany with their holy influence. But those who by temperament or experience were qualified to receive his teachings obtained very much benefit from intercourse with him. Oftentimes a single, simple word, spoken in the fullness of the Spirit and with the peculiar unction which characterized him, would be sufficient to break the fetters of Satan and bring about deliverance or large illumination.

To a sister who was at one time in heaviness he said: "Are you glad?" "For what?" "That He is your life." And immediately the living waters began to flow. Of one who desired to enter into a deeper union with God he asked: "Do you want the Lord to look upon you as wholly at His disposal?" "I do." "And do you say, All that I have is His?" "Yes." "Well, then, He says the same to you: All that *I* have is thine." And the Holy Spirit speedily witnessed to the betrothal of this soul to the

Heavenly Bridegroom. To another who longed to know the keeping power of Christ, he said: "Can you not trust Jesus to save you this moment?" "Yes, I could for one moment." "But can you not trust Him right along moment by moment?" "I think I could if I could always remain in this chair." "Then consider yourself always in that chair; that is, remain in the same attitude of spirit before the Lord." Her testimony ever after was: "I have always remained in the chair, and find Jesus a present Saviour." To one who said: "I shall never be satisfied until I awake in His likeness," he replied; "In whose likeness are you awaking day by day?" Some one remarked to him: "We shall be beyond the clouds by and by." His reply was: "We are above them now." Another said: "I have been walking in a very narrow way; there has only been room enough for me and Jesus." His quick answer was: "Oh, that was too much room; if there had been room enough only for Jesus, you would have had no trouble."

On nothing did he lay more stress than on the privilege of the believer to be one with Christ, and his right on that account to adopt and apply to himself a large part of the language used by the Saviour with reference to Himself and His relations to the Father. The oneness of the branch with the Vine, so that all the strength

of the Vine, so far as the branch needed it or could contain it, and so long as the connection was unimpeded, passed into the branch, was very real to him, and far from being a mere figure of speech. St. Paul's declaration that we are *temples* of the Holy Ghost he most fully accepted, and was fond of finding allusions to the fact in unexpected places, bringing out this truth with power to the abundant edification of those whom he addressed. With beaming face and outstretched hands he would look around on the circle of God's children met for spiritual intercourse and rapturously exclaim: "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" And again he would say, with special emphasis: "The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him." That which was simply of earth, the fleshly, the carnal, he very effectually and habitually silenced, that the Lord's voice might be clearly heard. Perhaps no word was oftener on his lips than: "Be still, and know that I am God." He found, I think, many meanings in it, as he did in so many other passages of Scripture which the average reader passes over with scant attention, noting only what is on the surface. From the height of his intense God-consciousness he spoke out to his lower earthly nature, bidding it be quiet and listen and learn. "When I awake," he would say, "I am *still* with

Thee." And it was this inward stillness which enabled him to hear so many heavenly voices. His constant prayer was: "Thy will be done in *earth*"—this earthly temple—"as it is in heaven."

His entrance on the higher Christian path was somewhat peculiar, and deserves to be narrated. While in his twentieth year, and after carrying for a long time a burden of sin, he quietly and deliberately said, while listening to a sermon: "I will take Jesus to be my Saviour." Immediately his burden was gone, God's love was shed abroad in his heart, and in less than three weeks he became a member of the Baptist Church in which he was converted. This was in April, 1834. He came to Boston not long after, from Portsmouth, his native place, as salesman in a dry goods store on Hanover Street. During the summer of 1839 a copy of President Mahan's "Christian Perfection" fell into his hands, and a careful study of that excellent book convinced him that there were high privileges before him which he had not yet reached. Having this increased light, he straightway obeyed it, and at once set out, with fullest purpose, to bring his whole being into oneness with God's will. He soon found that God had come into his life to abide, and he was filled with the Holy Ghost and with great peace. "Thenceforward," he says, "nothing disturbed my inward calm, though I

had been troubled by a hasty temper. It became my meat and drink to do His will as soon as known."

Feeling a call to preach, and the Baptist Church not encouraging his new views on sanctification, he was drawn to enter the Methodist Episcopal Church, which he did at Marblehead, in 1841, under the ministry of Rev. James Mudge, a kindred spirit, with whom he studied theology, and who gave him a license to preach. During the second year of his active ministry, which only lasted from 1842 to 1846, his attention was called to this word, in Jer. 15: 19: "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." He had thought this fully done before, but now he became still more sensitive Godward, and began to detect forms of selfishness not previously discerned. This stumbled him at first, but soon seeing clearly that a deeper consecration was necessary, he answered quickly: "Yes, Lord, all this, and more, if it be Thy will." It proved to be, he says, the lesson of his life. Whenever afterward anything came up that involved or threatened conflict, or indicated that there was a further work to be accomplished, he at once yielded himself to God for the fuller installments of the life of Christ. Thus he became quickly conscious when any lack of harmony with the divine will presented itself, and, imme-

diately taking the further step thus pointed out, went triumphantly forward with great strides. He passed very early beyond the point where there needed to be any "struggling and wrestling to win it," and came among the "more than conquerors" who have no special occasion to shout victory because there has been no conflict.

The work of grace was thus with him very manifestly both instantaneous and gradual—gradual as the new light kept coming, to which he instantaneously responded. That which with some teachers was the summit—the mere living without conscious or wilful sin—was with him only the foundation on which he solidly built. He took people where they were left by these teachers, and led them on to much loftier heights. He said to them: "You need not seek a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit in consequence of these disturbances into which you have been thrown by the reappearance of the self-life, for the Comforter comes to abide; when the self-life at any point manifests itself, die to it in your will on the instant, and the Christ-life will stand revealed." He often quoted "The Lord delighteth in the death of His saints"; and, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them." He fully believed that when every form of self is yielded, and we are fully at the Lord's dis-

posal, He is made unto us wisdom, so that our doubts and perplexities disappear; we hear His voice and know not the voice of strangers. "Let the Christ life come forth," he would say, "that which is within you, that which alone you should acknowledge as having possession; it is not necessary always to have a conscious realization of the fruits of the Spirit, but if they are there, or since they are there, they will show themselves when called for." The shower which refreshes the earth may not be visible after a little, for it has sunk into the soil, but it will duly appear in the ripening fruits. We draw the water from the faucets as it is needed, and are well content to have it awaiting us in quiet rather than embarrassing us in obtrusive superabundance.

He was childlike in a marked degree, abounding in pleasantry, always cheerful, sunny, and happy. He deemed that God "hath given us richly all things to enjoy," and meant our natural appetites and powers to be inlets of gratification. His exhortation was: "Children of the Heavenly King, as we journey let us *sing*." "All my springs are in Thee," was his testimony; and he liked to say, as he entered a company, exhilaration in every movement and stamped visibly on the countenance: "My cup runneth over." No one doubted it. His abiding home was in the

thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. His very presence was a stimulus and a benediction. No one could see him without the consciousness that he walked with God and lived from "a great depth of being." He knew all the paths of Beulah Land. To a dear friend who inquired if he could tell just where he was in the Christian life, he replied: "I only know that I am in a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein goes no galley with oars; where there is no need for painful effort; for souls that have passed into God find no latitude nor longitude, but are in infinite spaces and must be continually led in ways that they know not." He pronounced no shibboleths, was not tenacious of any terms, or anxious to stretch others on some Procrustean bed; he reached no finality in his experience—his course was ever onward. "He must increase, but I must decrease," he said. In the fullest sense he lived the life of faith. He claimed nothing for himself, and was greatly surprised that any should ever suppose that he did. "I thought they would understand that I was speaking of my Beloved." He had no quarrel with any. Bishop Gilbert Haven, in whose Malden home he was a frequent and welcome visitor, the special friend and counselor of mother and sister, said: 'Brother Hall is one of the few truly good men with a deep experience who does not undervalue

the experience of others. He is all right, only he is twenty years ahead of his time."

He held great numbers of meetings which were centers of wonderful blessing to large multitudes. They were unconventional in character. Nothing was to him an interruption, and if a message was given to or by another, he was ever ready to hold his peace. He waited on the Spirit, and was careful to speak only in the Spirit. He counted those with whom he assembled "mutual helpers in the grace of God," and would smilingly say: "We have met on 'Change; we have not to urge Jesus to come, but only to acknowledge His presence, and if all are obedient we will have a profitable meeting." He was a pastor at large, doing the Lord's work and speaking the Lord's words wherever he went.

He said: "I have two little words ever in use, Yea and Nay; toward God in all things my yea is yea, and toward anything opposite to Him my nay is nay." This life long habit of saying yes to God frequently found expression in an inclination of the head, with the words: "The Christian should always be polite, ever bowing to God's providence, to whatever is allowed to express His will." A dear brother, the janitor of a neighboring church, said: "I will take that nod of yours, Brother Hall," and soon found the trials natural to his position changed to loving

service. He had a peculiarly hearty "Amen," which much impressed itself upon his friends, and it was uttered very strongly with reference to any and every point of God's will, so much so that some, when about to pray for the removal of trials, threatened or actual, have stopped as though they heard that "Amen," and changed their prayer into: "Even so, Father, if so it seemeth good in Thy sight."

Among his fruitful words may be quoted the following: "Be a barometer Godward, sensitive only for Him, and the vaporous appearance of self that may sometimes enter your horizon will never gather into a cloud." "Be beheaded, beloved, and then be headed with Christ, your living Head." "Temptations are your spiritual gymnasium." "Believing is be leaving and be living—living the new life after leaving the old." "The secret of living in Him and walking in His power is always to count with God; when temptations and trials come, count them all joy." "We must ever be the latest edition of the truths of God's Word." "I have made His will my pleasure, and He has made my wants His care." "To a real Christian there is always a divine order, a fullness of time, in all things." "It is not enough that you find your home in God; He wants to find His home in you." "The heart that is satisfied with the will of God dwells in

heaven." "Everything that is allowed to come into our lives is remedial, to the end that we may have increased conformity to the likeness of Christ." "Cease from thoughts that disturb the peace, or increase fears about results." "The fear of evil invites evil." "It is our privilege to say at all times: 'Thou, O Lord, shalt glorify Thyself in and with me where Thy providence has placed me.'" "We being His, and His providence holding us in the fire, lie down in it in His stillness. Recognize only Him in your fire; in His stillness let the storm pass over your mind, leaving His peace and contentment; He will properly appear in your extremity."

He was able, in a good degree, to appropriate divine strength for the body, claiming Christ as a healer, without fanaticism, but in a way that was very effective and anticipatory of some modern truths in the New Thought and in Christian Science which have not perhaps received all the attention from the orthodox that they deserve. "There may be an eternal gain in long life," he said, "in overcoming in the midst of infirmity, so be in no haste to leave the body. Time enough for the other life by and by—that will keep. I do not care to go where I am not yet wanted." When told by a physician that it was a marvel he was alive, as apparently he had exhausted his natural strength, he said: "Then

I will take the Lord's strength and run along," which he did for some years, proving the promise: "With long life will I satisfy him and show him My salvation." He was well on in his 88th year when he closed his eyes on earth.

His last conscious words were in response to the question: "How do you do, this morning?" He characteristically replied: "I am doing the will of my Lord." He always did it. And the fitting epitaph on his tombstone in Woodlawn Cemetery, placed there by his widow, who had and has a very large measure of the same spirit, is:

"He lived what he preached—oneness with the Divine will."

Though absent from us in the body, he is present with us still in spirit, present with the Lord, in glorious union with whom he spent his days. He goes on living in the lives of the great multitude whom he assisted to know Christ better, and who can never forget his wise, genial, tender counsels. Such make little stir among men; they are not called great here, but their true greatness is realized in heaven, and their reward is sure.



## SOME HAPPINESS SECRETS.

## WAITING

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Serene, I fold my hands and wait,  
Nor care for wind or tide or sea;  
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,  
For lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,  
For what avails this eager pace?  
I stand amid the eternal ways,  
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night, by day,  
The friends I seek are seeking me;  
No wind can drive my bark astray,  
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?  
I wait with joy the coming years;  
My heart shall reap where it has sown  
And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own, and draw  
The brook that springs in yonder height;  
So flows the good with equal law  
Unto the soul of pure delight.

The stars come nightly to the skies,  
The tidal wave unto the sea,  
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,  
Can keep my own away from me.

JOHN BURROUGHS.

## SOME HAPPINESS SECRETS.

Bishop Janes, in a letter to his daughter which may be found in his biography, related the following suggestive and instructive incident:

"I remember the first year I was in the ministry, I visited an aged and poor colored woman. I found her very happy, notwithstanding her many infirmities. I asked her, 'Are you always happy?' She replied, 'Yes, always happy.' 'But are you never unhappy?' She replied with great earnestness, 'No, I won't be unhappy.' I presume I have thought of that visit a thousand times. I am persuaded the will has much to do with our happiness."

This persuasion of the good bishop's I fully believe to be entirely reasonable, and worthy of all acceptation. Not that our will can directly control our feelings. It would be the utmost folly to expect our emotions to go and come at call. But indirectly they may be regulated with comparative ease. We can command our thoughts. We can influence our minds to such and such trains of reflection. We can turn resolutely away from the consideration of disagreeable

topics, and refuse to dwell on the unpleasant aspects of an inevitable situation. All this is certainly in our power. And it is by these means that we can largely determine how much or how little happiness we will have.

For example, the poor woman above referred to might easily have made herself very wretched by brooding over the hardships of her lot, by looking continually at the many who were in more prosperous outward circumstances than she, by reckoning up her discomforts, by minimizing her mercies and magnifying her merits. But she evidently took the opposite course. She put a low estimate on her deserts, which is only another way of saying that she was truly humble. She considered that one who had done so little for God, and was so full of faults and failures as she, had no sort of right to complain if he gave her far less than she actually received. She no doubt reflected how much worse it might justly have been with her, and that multitudes quite as worthy were much worse off. She seized upon all the little common mercies of her daily life, such as are usually overlooked, and made much of them, praising God for His constant remembrance of her. And she probably had gained by close communion with her Father in heaven that rare wisdom which perceives the hidden blessing in what seems baneful, the real good in apparent ill.

Under such conditions of course she was happy. How could it be otherwise?

May it not be expected of all true Christians that they should say with this woman, "I won't be unhappy?" Is there not always a bright side to be looked at, a smooth handle to be grasped? It is a saying of Epictetus, the old Stoic philosopher, "Everything has two handles—one by which it may be borne; another by which it cannot." The suggestion seems to be that there are various cups on the table of life or various burdens in our pathway, and whether they are attended with gaiety or gloom depends wholly on the way we take them. If we take the day by the handle of a frown the clouds will lower and the rain will be likely to pour till we are drenched and disagreeable. But the stormiest day taken with a smile will turn into sunshine and all around us be pleasant. If we take our work by the handle of reluctance it will tend to become intolerable; while the same work grasped cheerfully by the handle of willingness grows easy. Our pleasure handled as a means of petty self-indulgence will yield no lasting good; but generously shared with others and found in the way of the Lord's appointment or sought for His glory it carries abiding bliss. And so with every part of our multifold existence.

Should we not live above the mists and

miasmas of all low lands? Should we not fly at such an elevation that the arrows shot at us whether by Satan or men will fall short and fail to pierce? There is a pretty story which this expression brings to mind. It is to the effect that one time when a flock of pigeons were flying over, John, the gardener, being importuned by his employer's niece to get his gun and shoot some, simply replied, "Couldn't do it, my little Miss, couldn't do it; couldn't bring 'em down nohow. Them pigeons and your uncle are a good deal alike. They've got a secret—he and the pigeons—that's just alike." The girl was puzzled, and at first provoked, not understanding what was meant. But in the afternoon when she went into the hayfield she found out. A man was doing the haying on shares, and about sunset it was discovered that he was not a man to be trusted, having driven off the largest and best loads for himself.

Uncle David, on being summoned, quietly asked, "What does all this mean?" The man, caught at his trick, flew into a violent rage and exclaimed, "It means that I won't work for nothing." And then he proceeded to pour out a flood of abusive and insulting language, Uncle David meanwhile receiving it as calm and serene as the blue sky above his head. "Doing right," he said to the man, "is worth more to you than all the hay in

the field. If you cheat me I shall lose but a little hay, but you will lose everything that makes the man."

And while with other such words of gentleness and reason he showed the man his mistake, John the gardener came up close to the little girl and whispered, "Your uncle David flies high, and if a dozen like that miserable old fellow should stand and fire at him all day they couldn't bring him down. I did not fire at them pigeons this morning, for I knew I couldn't hit 'em, they were flying so high. And if that foolish man had known as much about your uncle as I did about the pigeons, he wouldn't have begun his firing. The pigeons and your Uncle David have the same secret—they both fly high." It is indeed a very blessed secret to live out of the range of everybody's gun, so near the sky as to be above the firing, never hit, unmoved by the vexations and troubles of daily life, meeting all trials little or large with quietness and peace undisturbed. It is a great thing to fly high.

Among the sayings of Arminius, the eminent theologian of Holland, are these words, well worthy of adoption, "I should be foolish were I to concede to any one so much of right in me as that he should be able to disturb me as often as he has a mind." Yet this foolishness is very

common. Most people put their peace at the mercy of almost any one who chooses to break it up. How manifest a mark of inferiority and slavery is this! How fatal to assured happiness! We are the children of a King. And it is surely the Father's will that His children should be essentially independent of circumstances, that they should be "more than conquerors" in whatever place He puts them. It is their privilege to "rise o'er sin and fear and care," and have all these things securely under their feet, in other words to be always happy. And privileges are duties.

Many people are not happy because they persist in taking offense at God. They are stumbled by His dealings. They demand explanations, and find none to satisfy them. They do not get on well with Him. They do not understand Him, and have not faith enough in Him to go quietly on their way without trying much to understand. So they become uneasy, discontented and miserable. What a pity! Bad as it is to become offended with men, it is much worse and every way far more disastrous to become offended with God, and to refuse to be pleasant toward Him, until He has cleared up the mystery or has treated us more to our liking. Many are in this position. They feel with Jonah that they do well to be angry. They do not want to be reconciled or to

submit their wills and confess their folly. But it is a great mistake. It certainly does not pay.

Let us be happy. We can if we will. It is a matter of will in two ways. It depends on our getting rid of our own old self-will and accepting God's will in its stead. And in order to effect this, we must put forth strenuously and continuously that rightful, proper power of will with which the Creator has endowed us, and which constitutes the chief element in our moral responsibility.

A recent devotional book, very excellent on the whole, casts much scorn on the idea that there is any virtue or religion in feeling happy, or that happiness is any gauge by which to test our spiritual condition. In doing so it assumes that happiness and righteousness are opposites, that the debauchee and voluptuary are happy, but not the strenuous fighter against evil.

We protest against this position. We deem it a flagrant abuse of a noble word. There is, perhaps, a grain of reason about it in that there should be always with us that strain of heroism that does not care to be coddled, does not perpetually seek soft places, delights in danger, or at least despises it, if it be in the way of duty. But no quarter should be given to the thought that real happiness is to be found anywhere except with the good. True happiness is surely

something higher than mere sensual pleasure or sensuous enjoyment. It has moral quality. It is serene, rational, abiding. The full, unimpeded use of our powers in unselfish service yields happiness of the truest kind. A rational moral being healthfully organized cannot be really happy while misusing himself or his opportunities in any way. Happiness is far more nearly allied to joy and gladness and bliss than it is to merely animal comfort or transient pleasure or the gratification of physical appetite. This is the common meaning of the word as employed by good writers. To degrade it, as the author above mentioned does, seems to us very objectionable. That sin brings happiness ought not for a moment to be granted.

The Scripture writers treat the word properly, and they have fixed its meaning for us. They say, "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he," "He that keepeth the law, happy is he," "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help," "Happy is he that hath mercy on the poor," "Happy is the man whom God correcteth," "Happy is the man that feareth always," "If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye," "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." And Christ pronounces supremely happy, the pure in heart, the gentle, the merciful, the pure in spirit, and those persecuted for His sake.

We cannot afford to spoil these declarations by admitting that any lower or contrary kind of conduct brings happiness. Nor is it well for us to lose sight of the fact that, in view of such texts as these, the possession of happiness furnishes a very important test of our religious condition. Happiness becomes a duty because it is the necessary result of doing certain things that are positively commanded. If we are not happy, that is, if we are full of anxiety and complaint, if we are melancholy, gloomy, distressed, worried, discontented, bitter, when such ample provision has been made by our heavenly Father to drive away these feelings, it is a just reproach upon us. We are manifestly to blame for our lack of happiness when it comes, as it usually does, from deficiency of trust in God. That He meant His children to be happy, that He is doing His best all the time to bring about that result, and that it will be brought about provided we co-operate with Him to this end, will hardly be doubted.

Why then is not our possession of joy in Jesus a fair and suitable test of our spiritual condition, particularly of our faith? If we look into the matter closely, shall we not discover here the real cause for our dumps, although we like to ascribe them to something more creditable? Had we a perfect faith, could we be otherwise

than perfectly happy? Have we any business to indulge in grief to such an extent that our happiness is destroyed? Even if, in a certain sense and for a time, "sorrowful," can we not be "always rejoicing?" Are not our hymns right which say that it is not in grief to harm us while God's love is left to us, that prisons would prove palaces if Jesus would dwell with us there, and that even though "every fond ambition" has perished, our condition is rich with God and heaven still our own?

It may indeed be admitted that there is a difference between the joy of the feelings and the joy of the will, that mere surface emotion is no proper criterion of our religious state, that we are not to make paramount the having what is frequently called "a good time." But on the other hand, it is surely very reprehensible to even intimate that the most genuine happiness is not to be found in the doing and bearing of all God's will. A matter of language, it will be said, a question of terms. Very true. But it is by no means unimportant that we have our language correct, Scriptural, rational. Great issues may turn on small parts of speech. Grave doctrines are determined and personal character is profoundly affected by our choice of adjectives and nouns. When people flippantly say, with reference to the highest state of grace, "Call it what

you will, it makes no difference to me," we are not impressed with their wisdom. For to call it something which throws out of gear a hundred Scripture texts, and puts a stigma on the larger part of the church of God, and leads inevitably to confusion, disappointment, and spiritual loss, is manifestly bad. Only when things are called by their right names will they take their rightful places and the best results will be reached.

Happiness, goodness and greatness have very close connections. Indeed they are inseparably bound up in one bundle. Each may be tested by the other. No one who is not habitually happy has a right to be called either good or great. Nor can any one who is not emphatically good be accounted either truly great or really happy. The elements of essential greatness are in him who, under all the changing circumstances of this mortal life, maintains undiminished felicity, and in spite of the thousand forms of subtle temptations holds an untouched integrity. This being the case, they are manifestly at fault who affect to despise happiness, and who deem it a comparatively unimportant matter whether one has perpetual joy or not. It is proved to be a fundamental affair, testifying to our mental and spiritual calibre more strongly perhaps than any other one thing. Let not the

gloomy, the discontented, the peevish, the melancholy put forward any claims to goodness or greatness. They are convicted of failure and fault, of weakness and wickedness, they are clearly lacking in faith and hope and love. In pointing out, then, some paths to happiness we are not intermeddling with a small matter, but with one of the very first importance.

Happiness is conditioned on the welcoming of God's will. He who heartily accepts that blessed will of the Heavenly Father which comes to us each moment through events has mastered the secret of a perfectly happy life. There is no joy in this world like that which springs from doing the divine pleasure. This secret of bliss seems to be hidden from all but a few; yet the joy is open to any who will take the requisite steps. This was the joy of Jesus, and He stands ready to share it with all who will follow Him fully. John G. Whittier, in a somewhat recently published letter, after referring to the uncomfortable-ness of notoriety and other drawbacks which his wide reputation brought, adds this significant and wholesome word: "If I ever feel like envying any one it is not the world-famous author, but some serene, devout soul who has made the life of Christ his own, and whose will is the divine will." Such an one is indeed blessed, and has a deep happiness which no amount of earthly glory

can confer. But envy is not called for, since the prize is within the reach of all—of all at least who begin the task in season and pursue it with intense desire.

Happiness is secured by diminishing one's desires and demands. This is far more important than adding to our possessions. Carlyle strikingly expressed this truth by saying: "The fraction of life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your numerator as by lessening your denominator. Nay, unless my algebra deceives me, unity itself divided by zero will give infinity. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then: thou hast the world under thy feet. It is only with renunciation that life, properly speaking, can be said to begin. We are not to add to the number of parts taken or grasped at, which the numerator represents, but lessen the number of particulars which appear to us essential to constitute a proper whole. If God is to us enough, and our desires apart from Him, the great Unity, are zero, then infinite bliss is ours." It is only a mathematical way of expressing the doctrine that full surrender is the prelude of full salvation, and that the death of self must precede possession of the true life.

Happiness depends very much on opinion. It is not the things themselves that trouble us half so much as it is our thought about the things.

By changing the latter, which is in our own power, we render ourselves independent of the former. Lord Bacon, who did so much to add to the stock of wisdom in the world, rarely said a better thing than the following: "There is this difference between happiness and wisdom—he that thinks himself the happiest man is really so: but he that thinks himself the wisest is generally the greatest fool." In other words, modesty and humility are invariable accompaniments of true wisdom, while happiness resides in the opinion. He is happy who believes every thing that happens to him is best, because coming from the hand of a loving Father.

Happiness is a mosaic made up of many little gems. That life, however humble and inconspicuous, which is filled from end to end with little words for Jesus, little acts of kindness, little deeds that bless, is splendidly successful and celestially beautiful. He who makes it his one business to do good, who seizes promptly the small opportunities for usefulness that are constantly recurring, who keeps on steadily day by day storing up treasure in heaven, has mastered the secret of true happiness and lasting wealth. He is a center of holy influence, and a perpetual diffuser of sunshine. He will have a great reward. The poet Wordsworth well speaks of "that best

portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

Happiness is intimately linked with industry and sincerity. To produce a happy life, it has been said, there must be great effort from great motives. Great success, it should be noted, is not set down as essential. The results we wish may or may not come. If our aim is high, our intentions pure, and we conscientiously do our best nothing can deprive us of a good measure of happiness; while wasted powers or low aims, or laziness and selfishness, are wholly incompatible with bliss.

Happy are they that give themselves away, for they shall be accounted beyond price. He who sells himself for so much, who works for wages, who makes bargains even in what he calls his benevolences, is sure to be dissatisfied; he will feel that he has been fooled, that the price for which he has sold himself and his benefaction is not adequate. True blessedness, lasting satisfaction, comes only to those who put off from them all self-seeking and self-interest, and join with the genuine heroes, the real monarchs of life, who scorn the methods of barter and give themselves with royal munificence to every worthy object.

Happy are they who are content with a little; for they shall have great wealth. Contentment

with godliness—and no other kind is real—furnishes wonderful gain. He whose desires overpass his acquirements, or whose expenditures exceed his receipts, is poor, no matter how large those expenditures or acquirements may be. He is rich who has as much as he wants, even if that be very little. The meek and humble "inherit the earth," which cannot be said of any monarch or millionaire.

Happy are they who make soft replies; for they shall break the hearts of their enemies. He who kicks against nothing hurts himself. When a man finds that the one he has been abusing is not only not perturbed, but is even moved to beneficence and compassion, he feels very small indeed. The contrast is humiliating, and is likely to crush. "To take no notice of an injury is to be even with our enemy; to forgive it is to be above him." Such a one scores three victories at once—he conquers himself, his foe, and the devil. And if the foe is not turned straightway into a friend, he will at least be so ashamed as not to invite a repetition of the treatment.

Happy are they who always speak the truth; for they shall be called the bravest of the brave. A liar is in every case a coward. To say that "all men are liars," was no doubt somewhat hasty in David; but he was not far out of the way if those be counted liars who at some time

or other, in some small particulars, deviate knowingly from the exact statement of fact. Lying means distrust of God, as well as fear of man. He who is full of courage and full of faith will have nothing to do with a lie, or with whatever looks like one. He despises it, and hates it.

Happy are they who hate iniquity; for they have broken the power of temptation. He who deliberates is lost. To parley with the foe is the next step to surrendering. Only they that are aggressive in antagonism to evil are safe. To carry the war into the enemy's country is the best way to protect our own borders. The gospel of hate is a counterpart to the gospel of love, and the one is imperfect without the other. Intensity is essential to a successful Christian life.

Happy are they who love the unlovely; for they shall find nothing too hard to do. Where the love of complacency is out of the question, the love of benevolence and compassion comes in. The disciple is not required to be above his Lord. Jesus did not approve of the Pharisees; He even "looked round about upon them with anger." But He pitied them, and died for them; "and greater love hath no man than this," nor need he have.

Happy are they who become nothing; for to them shall be given all. It is absolutely the only way to get all. The number of those in any

country who discover this secret, and perfectly attain the state, could probably be counted on the fingers. It is certainly very, very small. Nothing means much; it includes everything.

It will surely be well with him who heeds these hints and undertakes in good earnest to master these secrets. Happy people are very much in demand. The supply is always too small. What a pity that our churches do not furnish a larger number. It surely is not wicked to be glad. To be glum is not a sacred duty. There is no sin in assurance, no presumption in being certain that we are saved, no impropriety in joy, no holiness in discontent. In other days doubts and fears were deemed virtues; saints were sad on purpose and from principle. But this is now very generally seen to have been a mistake. The Bible has no precept which reads, "Groan in the Lord always, and again I say, groan." Quite the contrary. It commands hallelujahs. Let us have more of them.

SUNSHINE ALL THE WAY.

## A PERFECT TRUST

---

Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust,  
    My loving God, in Thee;  
Unwavering faith, that never doubts  
    Thou choosest best for me.

Best, though my plans be all upset;  
    Best, though the way be rough;  
Best, though my earthly store be scant;  
    In Thee I have enough.

Best, though my health and strength be gone,  
    Though weary days be mine,  
Shut out from much that others have;  
    Not my will, Lord, but Thine!

And even though disappointments come,  
    They too are best for me,  
To wean me from this changing world,  
    And lead me nearer Thee.

Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust  
    That looks away from all;  
That sees Thy hand in everything,  
    In great events or small;

That hears Thy voice—a Father's voice—  
    Directing for the best:—  
Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust,  
    A heart with Thee at rest!

## SUNSHINE ALL THE WAY.

The sunshine of God's presence, the hallowed light of His love, is the true abiding place of the soul. To tarry even for a time anywhere else is loss, and leanness, and lack of health. Here alone is fullest happiness and strength. "The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee," was the central portion of Israel's ancient benediction. And one of David's favorite prayers—it should certainly be ours—was, "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant."

"The Lord God is a sun." That beneficent work which the glowing luminary of heaven performs for the natural world—vitalizing, animating, warming, coloring, cheering, strengthening—"the Sun of righteousness" does in the spiritual realm. Fairer than the summer, sweeter than the song of birds, more beautiful than the flowers, more glorious than that flood of life and light which betokens the presence of the bright king of the earthly day, is the presence of Him who brings life to the soul. This well know they who can say with Paul, "For God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath

shined in our hearts." Such shining in, on and around the happy heart is a perpetual source of joy and peace unutterable.

Perpetual? Can it be? May the soul bask in this delightful sunshine all the while, and bid farewell to gloom and darkness, cloud and storm? Is there a Beulah land where "shines undimmed one blissful day," and may we inhabit that delightful country, close on the borders of paradise, within view of the celestial city? Yes.

"A land of corn and wine and oil,  
Favored with God's peculiar smile,  
With every blessing blest;  
There dwells the Lord our righteousness,  
And keeps His own in perfect peace,  
And everlasting rest,"

has been discovered, conquered and possessed by the faithful few who have gone up out of the wilderness, leaning on the arm of their Beloved and trusting only in His might. They have proved and know that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." They have tested the truth of Isaiah's declaration, "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

These are descriptions not of heaven above, but of the heaven begun below in the breast of him who dares to believe God. What says Faber, the pre-eminent poet of the deepest spiritual life?

“If our love were but more simple,  
We should take Him at His word,  
And our lives would be all sunshine,  
In the sweetness of the Lord.”

“*All* sunshine?” Yes. There is such a thing as cloudless communion with God; no barrier of sin interposed to cast a shadow on the soul. There is a close companionship with Jesus which “makes life with bliss replete.” There is a fellowship so dear that no foes or woes can make the heart afraid or disturb the serenity of its rest. The “path illumined by His smile grows brighter day by day,” and they who run in it are not weary, they who walk in it are not faint. The summer lasts all the year, because He whose presence disperses all gloom and whose voice is sweeter than any music is always nigh to banish the night.

“Their souls are ever bright as noon,  
And calm as summer evenings be.”

As to the means for gaining this land of bliss

and brightness, the poet above quoted intimates that they are a simple love and a more child-like trust. They could not perhaps be better expressed. Yet any and all expressions are painfully lame and inadequate, alike in describing the country and in pointing out the way to reach it.

God is love. And the more love for all creatures we can store away in our hearts the more of His presence will be secured to us. Anything within us contrary to love both indicates His absence and produces it. Hence we must set it as our primary and never ceasing task to increase our stock of love and to guard against anything which would injure or diminish it. The same is true of trust. Trustfulness, with which hopefulness is so closely allied, in proportion to its supreme sway in the soul, assures us of sunshine. Doubt and fear and care disappear at its approach. Whatever legitimately strengthens our trust in God should be closely cherished. Prompt and hearty obedience to all His commands lies at the root. This is a fundamental requisite, for nothing so surely hinders trust as any disobedience or failure to comply heartily and promptly with every requirement of the Lord. And nothing is so sure and accurate a measure of love as this same complete performance of all precepts. Of great help also

is everything that increases our knowledge of God, our apprehension of His perfect wisdom, power and affection for us, as well as our acquaintance with our own great weakness and utter need. For the more we know God the more we shall love and trust Him. And the more we know ourselves the less will be our love and trust in that direction.

It is by these means that God brings us into the perfect and perpetual sunshine. And it often happens that when we are first fully introduced to it we do not manage to stay very long, on account of our ignorance of the laws of the land. But as we learn them more thoroughly we become established in our possession and it becomes our settled abiding place.

It should perhaps be added to prevent misunderstanding, that this sunshine of God's presence is quite compatible with such gentle showers as are needful for growth, and with winds of keenness and searching power that test the strength of the pilgrim who toils against them. The sun shines through the rain forming a bow of beauty, the token of God's everlasting covenant of mercy with His people. And the winds, and other obstacles in the way, do but brace the system, supplying fuller, sounder health.

"My Saviour, Thee possessing,  
I have the joy, the balm,  
The healing and the blessing,  
The sunshine and the psalm."

It is really amazing what a hold this thought, that sunshine is the true, normal aspect of the Christian's path, has taken on the minds of our song writers. Probably not less than a dozen of our popular hymns, most frequently sung in prayer meetings, have as their theme and basis this idea. Few pieces are oftener started, or rendered with heartier enjoyment, than

"There's sunshine in my soul to-day,  
More glorious and bright  
Than glows in any earthly sky,  
For Jesus is my light."

"Oh, there's sunshine, blessed sunshine,  
While the peaceful, happy moments roll,  
When Jesus shows His smiling face,  
There is sunshine in my soul."

How can it be otherwise? No darkness or gloom can withstand the impact of His presence. No storm can resist His "Peace, be still." "Where Jesus is, 'tis heaven," and it would be utterly incongruous to imagine aught but brightness there. Well does the hymn go on to speak of music and gladness and springtime, "the dove of peace," and

“the flowers of grace,” inseparably associated with the time “when the Lord is near.” The same thought appears in the exceedingly familiar hymn, “Trust and Obey,” where we read—

“Not a shadow can rise,  
Not a cloud in the skies,  
But His smile quickly drives it away;  
Not a doubt nor a fear,  
Not a sigh nor a tear  
Can abide while we trust and obey.”

The beauty of this is that it puts so compactly and truthfully the cause and effect, the condition and the consequence; for “while we do His good will,” walking with the Lord in the light of His Word, a glory, indeed, is shed upon the way, our burdens are borne, our sorrows are shared and practically destroyed, our toil is richly repaid, while in fellowship sweet we sit at His feet or walk by His side in the way. Obedience is easy in the strength that cometh from trusting God, and trusting is easy when the obstacle that disobedience presents is taken out of the path. Another of these hymns is called “Heavenly Sunlight,” and has for its chorus this:

“Heavenly sunlight, heavenly sunlight;  
Flooding my soul with glory divine;  
Hallelujah, I am rejoicing,  
Singing His praises, Jesus is mine.”

Not much of elevated poetry, it may be said, in these rollicking rhymes ; but they surely serve a worthy purpose if they can convey into the heart of the singer—as they are well calculated to do, being matched with stirring, bounding melody—something of the ecstasy which throbs in their glowing syllables. “Walking in sunlight all of my journey,” the song says, “in the bright sunlight, ever rejoicing, singing His praises.” The very repeating of the words helps to keep before the mind the blessed fact that such walking, so rarely seen, is to be counted among our possibilities and privileges. It is easy to make fun of these jingles and call them childish, but we think they have a place, and we find in them an aid not to be despised, even in the following :

“On Sunday I am happy, on Monday full of joy,  
On Tuesday I have peace within which nothing can  
destroy,  
On Wednesday and on Thursday I’m walking in the  
light;  
On Friday ’tis a heaven below, and Saturday’s always  
bright.”

People who can sing, or say, this from the heart, meaning every word, are fully saved every day in the week, and every week in the year. They sit in God’s banqueting house, and His banner over them is love. Another of this class of

songs, which celebrates "this wonderful salvation and His redeeming grace, the comfort of His presence, the shining of His face," has a chorus which runs as follows:

"There is sunlight, sunlight, beaming bright and clear,  
In the sweetness of His service day by day;  
There is sunlight, sunlight, with my Saviour near,  
There is bright and blessed sunlight all the way."

Shall not they who feel this "shout a glad hosanna for every victory won," while their soul is filled with strength and courage in the fray? They find it good to "let a little sunshine in," as still another of the hymns expresses it, to "clear the darkened windows, open wide the door," and bid defiance to the foe, while they "go rejoicing on the upward way, knowing naught of darkness, dwelling in the day." Then there are at least three songs which dwell on the duty of sending out this sunshine which has been let in. One says,

"Scatter sunshine all along your way,  
Cheer and bless and brighten every passing day."

And it rightly emphasizes the amount of joy and comfort which can thus be bestowed in a world where so much sorrow is known. Another song rings the changes on "Send out the sunlight of love" and of cheer, in letter and word,

each hour of the day, that thus the burdens may be lightened, the miles of the journey shortened, the hungry hearts fed. Still another is entitled "Just a little sunshine," and inculcates the truth that if we are to be like the blessed Master we must do our part to lift the clouds of sorrow and make the roses grow. Then we have "Stepping in the Light," "Walking in the beautiful light of God," "Jesus, the Light of the world," "Send the Light," and many another that need not here be mentioned. The hymn writers have certainly done their part to introduce us into the Beulah land where it is such immense joy to live, where is found the finest felicity, the highest hilarity, the jolliest jocularity, where there is cloudless communion, where companionship with Jesus makes life with bliss replete, where we enjoy a fellowship so dear that no foes or woes can make the heart afraid or disturb the serenity of its rest.

We believe God wants Zion in these days, as much as in the days of old, to put on her beautiful garments, to have her "garments always white," smelling of "myrrh and aloes and cassia," while the head is anointed with "the oil of gladness." The prophet declares that in the year of Jehovah's favor His people shall have "the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Why not? It is most comely.

THE NINETY-FIRST PSALM.

## WHAT MATTER.

---

What matter, friend, though you and I  
    May sow, and others gather?  
We build, and others occupy  
    Each laboring for the other?  
What though we toil from sun to sun,  
    And men forget to flatter  
The noblest work our hands have done?  
    If God approves, what matter?

What matter though we sow in tears,  
    And crops fail at the reaping?  
What though the fruit of patient years  
    Fail, perish in our keeping?  
Upon our hoarded treasures floods  
    Arise, and tempests scatter;  
If faith beholds beyond the clouds  
    A clearer sky, what matter?

What matter though our castles fall,  
    And disappear while building?  
Though "strange handwriting" on the wall,  
    Flame out amid the gilding?  
Though every idol of the heart  
    The hand of death may shatter,  
Though hopes decay, and friends depart;  
    If heaven be ours, what matter?

H. W. TELLER.

## THE NINETY-FIRST PSALM.

We have already said that no portion of Scripture is more prolific of aid to the life of ecstasy, through its praises, prayers, precepts, and promises, than the Book of Psalms. And if one were driven to the hard task of selecting three of these one hundred and fifty Hebrew hymns as, on the whole, best adapted to nourish the faith of God's children and increase their confidence in Providence, the choice of most would probably rest on the 23d, the 46th and the 91st. It is quite certain that the first and last of these, at least, are supreme favorites.

It would be easy to write a chapter on the 23d, the shepherd psalm, which is doubtless the dearest of all, the sweetest, the most precious, committed to memory more widely and frequently than any other six consecutive verses of the Bible. But the very fact that it has been written upon so much, and that its riches are so thoroughly understood, makes it less necessary that we enlarge upon it here. Its imagery is very significant, its phrases very musical, its sentiment every way beautiful. It contains most wholesome doctrine.

It is extremely stimulating to faith. It seems to be inexhaustible in its suggestiveness. It has a power to stir the heart that everybody feels. The dullest recognize something of its loveliness. The brightest find that each new reading brings out something fresh. Its pastures of tender grass, its waters of quietness and rest, its overflowing cup and full table, its gentle leadings and guidings, its gracious restorings, its deliverance from all danger, its protection against all foes, its comfort amid all sorrows, its bountiful banqueting and grateful anointing, its goodness and loving kindness to follow, like footmen, "all the days," its happy life without want, happy death without fear, happy eternity "in the house of the Lord forever," its perfect satisfaction and perfect consecration, its emphasis on righteousness, its fullness of hope, its strong personal affirmations, its certainty and clearness and rapturousness—how much it all means, how impossible to sound its deepest depths. We may well thank God for this psalm, and give praises for the day when it was born.

Then there is the 46th, almost equally a gem in its way, though not so universally appreciated and prized. It was Luther's favorite, the basis of his magnificent hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," the battle song of the Reformation. In the darkest hours he used to say, "Come, let us

sing the 46th psalm, and let them do their worst." It has been a strong support to multitudes more, in the three thousand years since it was written, "a very present help in trouble." The whole "city of God," that is, the assembly of the redeemed in all lands, they who have become "tabernacles of the Most High," have been made glad by the streams of this full flowing river of sacred song, and by Him of whom it speaks. In the midst of raging nations and moving kingdoms, shaking mountains and roaring waters, they have not been moved or troubled. They have counted both the "desolations" and the pacifications in the earth to be equally "works of the Lord," and have rejoiced in both, because they have beheld in them Him, their great Companion. They have heard Him say, "Be still, and know," and in the silence which His blessed presence makes they have come to know Him as never before, to comprehend His character, His truth, His wisdom, His power, His love, and to say, This God of the patriarchs and prophets, this mighty Jehovah of hosts, is even with *us, our* refuge and strength.

We take up more fully the 91st, because it seems to fall in so perfectly with the scheme of this book, to detail so graphically God's care, to strike so high a note of joy, to speak so clear a word of trust, to embody, or imply, so many comprehensive promises; while at the same time it

needs, perhaps, a little more than the other two, a few words of explanation.

In the first place, we suggest that it would be much plainer and more precious if the pronouns were uniformly throughout put in the first person. At present all three persons are used, somewhat miscellaneous and indiscriminately and with much confusion of the sense. Commentators have been puzzled by it, and have found it very difficult to give any good reason for such perplexing alternations. It must be admitted, we think, to be a large drawback from the unity and simplicity and effectiveness of this poetical composition, a manifest flaw in its structure. We deem it wholly allowable to increase its devotional power by such a transposition of the pronouns as will make them harmonious throughout. By putting all in the first person—or at least all after the first verse, which is a kind of general introduction and prelude to the testimony—we have a straightforward declaration, harmonious from beginning to end, and far more emphatic. The meaning is not changed in the slightest degree, no liberty is taken with the sentiment or the doctrine; but the needless distraction from the frequent, and, so far as can be discerned, meaningless, shifting about of the persons, is avoided, and there is manifest gain in power. For the purposes of the closet we would certainly advise that this substituting be

always made. In the reading here given we follow the American Revised Version (as usually throughout this book), adopting its marginal rendering in the first verse, then changing the pronoun "thou," "thine," "thee," to "I," "mine," and "me," so as to make the rest of the psalm a continuous, affirmative witness on the part of the saint who is supposed to be speaking, who is introduced to us, indeed, in the second verse of the common translation, and then, for some unaccountable cause, disappears, for the most part, in all the other verses.

"He that dwelleth in the sacred place of the Most High, that abideth under the shadow of the Almighty, even *I*, will say of Jehovah, He is *my* refuge and *my* fortress, *my* God, in whom *I* trust. For He will deliver *me* from the snare of the fowler, and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover *me* with His pinions, and under His wings will *I* take refuge; His truth is a shield and a buckler. *I* will not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at my side, and ten thousand at my right hand, but it shall not come nigh *me*. Only with mine eyes shall I behold and see the reward of the wicked. For thou, O Jehovah, art *my* refuge. I have made the Most High *my* habitation; there

shall no evil befall *me*, neither shall any plague come nigh *my* tent. For He will give His angels charge over *me*, to keep *me* in all *my* ways. They shall bear *me* up in their hands, lest I dash *my* foot against a stone. *I* shall tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the serpent shall *I* trample under foot. Because *I* have set *my* love upon Him, therefore will He deliver *me*; He will set *me* on high, because I have known His name. *I* will call upon Him, and He shall answer *me*; He will be with *me* in trouble; He will deliver *me*, and honor *me*. With long life will He satisfy *me*, and show *me* His salvation."

What can be more deserving of profound meditation than this remarkable poem. Whatever time may be spent upon it will be repaid a thousand-fold. There are, to be sure, those who hardly know how to take it, who are, indeed, not a little stumbled by its positive, sweeping assertions, which, they say, are not borne out in daily life. They declare that the righteous man is not immune from the attacks of disease and other such things, that the pestilence seizes him, the lion tears him, the serpent stings him, and that plentiful evils of every sort befall him. "Wings," they cry, "feathers, bucklers, angels in charge? We do not see them; we know nothing of them; quite the opposite has been our portion; we are not sheltered in a fortress, we are exposed to many

foes, we are loaded with many weights, we are bound fast in shackles." Yes, no doubt. Promises of this sort are by no means for all. The first verse makes that plain. A very exclusive circle, indeed, is indicated. To have any right to these grand words, one must "dwell in the secret place of the Most High" and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Surely this points to the closest, completest fellowship with God, to a communion with Him that is continuous, knowing no diminution or deviation. It includes those, and only those, who have been far beyond the outer courts of the sanctuary, and have penetrated to the most holy place, the innermost shrine. There, under the outstretched wings of the cherubim, close beside the mercy-seat, with the Shekinah blazing upon them, the most intimate audience chamber of the Most High their abode and habitation, not where they are favored guests for a transient, trembling hour, but where they dwell *always*, there, in that mysterious ecstatic presence staying, it is not difficult to repeat with all confidence the words of this psalm. The power to repeat them honestly, and to understand them fully, is one of the perquisites and tokens of those who reside in the place mentioned. He who balks at these declarations may rightfully conclude that his residence is elsewhere. They who, like Anna, depart not from the temple day or night,

or who, like the virgin souls mentioned in the Apocalypse, follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, do not find these words too strong for them or meet with any difficulty in making them their own.

Of course it is the imaginative language of poetry, kindled and crowded with emotion, and not to be interpreted as if it were a series of mathematical propositions. There are no literal pinions by which we are to be covered, just as there are no literal hawks which are seeking to pounce upon us. It is a beautiful symbol, like that which the Saviour used when He said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." The lion and the adder will not literally lie down innocuous and permit us to work our will upon them unresisting. This probably everybody understands. And in the same way, making due allowance for the imagery, we may understand the other strong expressions. We do not look to see precisely ten thousand people drop dead at our right hand, nor should we feel that God had in any way deserted or forgotten us if He took us to Himself by means of some contagious disease. He who insists on any of these particulars shows that he has not mastered the rudiments of this style of literature. But the preciousness and power of

this noble poem do not depend at all upon our being able to find in each word and phrase the precise measure of our protection, but rather in the absolute trustfulness in God, which every line so deliciously breathes. Other symbols than these might have been used for conveying the same ideas, as indeed they are in the 23d psalm, and other assertions of similar purport made, as they are in other parts of Scripture; but nowhere do we discover anything more solid, more beautiful, more profound, more cheering than this, nowhere a loftier tone, a nobler faith. It has been well said that "No poem, either in Greek or Latin, is comparable to this Hebrew ode"; nor has it been surpassed in modern times.

It contains so much that we cannot hope in the limited space we ought here to fill to do more than indicate very briefly a few of its treasures. For one thing, it calls attention, near the very beginning, to the importance of open, bold avowal—"I will *say* of Jehovah"—in honor of God and His goodness. Believers ought to speak out more freely and let their joys be known, so that others may be led to seek the same confidence in the Lord. We permit a false modesty, a craven fear of slighting remarks or of misjudgment, too often to stop our tongues and rob God of the glory which is His due.

The four names of Deity in the first and second

verses are noteworthy, indicating, it has been suggested, the four thoughts, communion, rest, joy, and trust. Four blessings are mentioned as coming from the wings: we are concealed, protected, refreshed, nourished. The four things that are specifically mentioned in the fifth and sixth verses—terror, arrow, pestilence, destruction—may well stand for all conceivable sources of harm from the four quarters of the earth, or the four dimensions of space, just as the four watches of night mean the whole realm of darkness.

It does not say that we shall not be *seized* by any pestilence, but that we shall not be *afraid* of any. And that distinction may well be borne in mind throughout the psalm. The thought of the writer manifestly is that nothing shall come upon the favorite of heaven, who is so near to God as to be within His shadow, except such as God may appoint for the carrying out of His infinitely wise and loving purposes. “There shall no *evil* befall” him; it being well understood that what we commonly call misfortunes, afflictions, and calamities are not truly evil to the believer, for he has an alchemy that turns them all to good. Losses enrich him, sickness is his medicine, reproach is his honor. Death itself is not to him an evil, but a gain. The Psalmist does not say that nothing painful shall befall him, but nothing evil. That

we may believe implicitly, for the whole Bible is full of it. May we not enlarge the promise so as to say that the plague of moral evil, or back-sliding into sin, shall not touch him who dwells in the secret place. He must go out of that sheltered refuge before the enemy can get any power over him.

Even if our earthly habitation be only a tent it is turned into an impregnable fortress if God be there. The princes of the blood imperial have an angel body-guard from heaven. As the nurse or the mother takes up the little one in especially rough walking lest his tender feet be bruised, so our heavenly father looks after us, warding off even the minor ills such as might come from the stones in the way. Satan quoted this to Jesus as an argument for presumption, leaving out the essential clause, "in all thy ways." It is only in the ways assigned us from above, and hence becoming in the best sense ours, it is only when God's ways become ours, that we have any business to expect the angel charge. In the path of duty, and until our day of work is done, we may defy the deadliest ills; neither force nor fraud, violence nor cunning, lions nor adders, can prevail against us; not even Satan, who is both the roaring lion and the gliding serpent. The people of God are the true lion-tamers and serpent-charmers. Satan, perhaps, may also be pointed at by the fowler, in

verse three. Paul tells us more than once of the snare of the devil, and those taken captive by him, and says, "they that are minded to be rich fall into a snare." Certainly from this the close walker with God is delivered, for he has such stores of true riches, all things being his, that he cares not for the perishing wealth of this world.

In the last three verses we have a wonderful description of God's favorites, and a plain intimation of what makes them His favorites. There are no less than seven "I wills" here—I will deliver him (repeated twice), I will set him on high, I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will honor him, I will satisfy him with long life, I will show him my salvation. What boundless provision of privilege is here! It seems to culminate and reach a climax at the close; for if we are shown *all* of God's great salvation, what more is there to ask for? And if our life is lengthened out till we are fully satisfied that we have had enough, what matters it when we go. It is, of course, the tendency of religion to lengthen life in the most literal sense, just as it is the tendency of fearlessness to thrust away contagion. A German physician was wont to speak of this psalm as the best preservative in times of cholera; the quiet cheerfulness which such words inspire is a marvelous prophylactic. God's honoring us, setting us on high, putting us on a

tower, does not, of course, necessarily mean that we shall be exalted in the sight of men; that is of no consequence. Nor does His answering us mean that He will grant all our requests; He cannot do so in our own interests, unless, indeed, we make our requests in the Spirit, while we abide in Jesus and His words abide in us. But the "answer" means that our petition will be carefully considered, and the very best thing done. May we not also find a personal touch in the "I will be with him," I, not my angels, not my messengers, when real trouble comes. We cannot put too much significance into that monosyllable "I."

What are the conditions of all this blessedness? Who are those thus favored? They who call upon God, and know His name, and *set* their love upon Him. We are not dowered with all these precious gifts because of our special deserts, or because we are peculiarly constituted in any way, but because, with all our imperfections we do love Him with all our heart, and trust Him with all our might. It would seem that they who really *know* Him, know His love and wisdom and power, know His trustworthiness and faithfulness and graciousness, must of necessity call upon him and love Him. Knowledge is at the bottom of it all. It is on this account that we have taken much pains in some of the previous chapters of this book to make the readers acquainted with

God's ways. When His character is fully grasped the best possible foundation is laid for all the glad glories of a life in closest union with Him. Many there are that love God, but not many have, in the completest sense of the term, *set* their love upon Him, in that intense, all-absorbing way which entitles them to dwell in the secret place, under the Almighty's shadow, and reap the good which so plentifully follows. Let the reader ask himself, to what extent or degree he can adopt the language of this psalm.

SOME MOTTOES AND MAXIMS.

## OUR HOME ABOVE.

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We thank Thee, gracious Father,  
For many a pleasant day,  
For bird and flower, and joyous hour,  
For friends, and work, and play.  
Of blessing and of mercy  
Our life has had its share;  
This world is not a wilderness,  
Thou hast made all things fair.

But fairer still, and sweeter,  
The things that are above;  
We look and long to join the song  
In the land of light and love.  
We trust the Word which tells us  
Of that divine abode;  
By faith we bring its glories nigh,  
While hope illumes the road.

So death has lost its terrors;  
How can we fear it now?  
Its face, once grim, now leads to Him  
At whose command we bow.  
His presence makes us happy,  
His service is delight,  
The many mansions gleam and glow,  
The saints our souls invite.

JAMES MUDGE.

## SOME MOTTOES AND MAXIMS.

The closing chapter of this endeavor to explain the underlying principles of a permanently ecstatic state may well be given, we think, to a sort of summary wherein shall be furnished a selection of mottoes, or pithy directions, having close bearing on the subject in hand. In making rules for a happy life no two persons would altogether agree as to phraseology or substance. There is manifest room for vast variety of statement. By their own experience or mental make-up some are ready to emphasize one phase of the matter, some another. The essentials may be substantially the same, while the way of putting it is very diverse. We submit the following, therefore, with deference, but with the hope that they may be found helpful to many, and with the firm assurance that, so far as adopted, they will tend toward abiding joy. We shall study brevity so far as it may be compatible with clearness and the due development of the thought.

*1. Deal directly with God.* Quite a part of this book has been occupied in showing why we should do this, and how large a ground there was

for it in the facts of God's relation to His creation. The propriety of it and the comfort of it is, we hope, by this time, sufficiently evident to all who have read thus far in these pages. The result of dealing exclusively, or even mainly, with men and things, as nearly all people do, is sore trial and great loss. It is certainly a great mistake. What are men but God's hand? What are things but the products of His power, and the channel of His energy? It is much better to go to headquarters and settle matters with the responsible manager of affairs, than to bother with subordinates. It is better to behold God's hand in everything, to take all from Him, and do all for Him. This makes a vast difference with our peace of mind. The bereavement which is so hard to bear when we imagine it the result of our own neglect, or of the ignorance, if not the wickedness, of others, becomes much easier when we receive it as the appointment of a loving Father too wise to err and too good to be unkind. To be stripped of our property by designing men or by the merciless conflagration is difficult to endure, but to give it up at the word of One who gave up everything through love of us is quite another thing. It is in this way we walk by faith, we defy circumstances, we disregard appearances, we tread the earth elastic and buoyant, a con-

tinual conqueror, putting all enemies under our feet. "Cease from man."

2. *Stop! Look! Listen!* At the crossing of the highways with some railway lines there has been placed, instead of the cumbersome, bungling old formula still elsewhere in use, the simple but effective and expressive legend, "Stop! Look! Listen!" This covers the whole ground in fewest words, says just enough and no more, hitting the essential points precisely. And these same three short syllables have very exact application to an important need of the religious life, the need of that constant recollectedness of spirit which is at the foundation of the practice of the presence of God and unceasing prayer. By persistence the invaluable habit may be formed of acting upon this comprehensive motto. It may come to be a spontaneous suggestion connected with passing down or up stairs, entering or leaving a room, crossing a street or a railway track, interviewing strangers or friends. The three things indicated have each a most important place in spiritual regimen, and when combined have wonderful power to enable us to keep ourselves in the love of God, and in that serenity of mind so desirable, but so often disturbed. We must pause in the mad rush of the times, cultivate moderation and deliberation, be calmer, unflustered, not eager and impatient, more tranquil and serene; then there will be fewer

breakdowns and larger accomplishment. We must lift our inward eye constantly to the source of our help, must look ever to Jesus if we would really live for Him, correcting human sights and estimates and glamours by the continual vision of the Saviour; then we shall keep a steady course to the heavenly harbor. We must hear what God is continually trying to say to us, for we cannot be counted as truly belonging to the flock of Christ if we are ignorant of His voice, and we can only recognize it by perpetual practice and by the hushing of other sounds. The essentials of the deepest, highest living are very closely involved in these three pungent imperatives. If they are duly heeded a delightful transformation will be wrought in the character, and God will be greatly glorified.

3. *Never Complain.* To complain is to sin. Very few seem to understand this, or, if they do, they are not very sensitive as to what they call little sins. They do not seriously take themselves to task about the habit of finding fault with almost everything that goes on around them, make no real effort to break themselves of it. They even take pride in it, as an evidence of their superiority, their high standard, their efficiency. It is right, of course, to protest, calmly, at proper times, against ill treatment; it is right to enter our objections to policies we do not approve; it is right to

see that subordinates do the work for which they are paid. The complaint that should be avoided is discontent with the divine arrangements, with things that are inevitable, irrevocable, irretrievable, and hence to be accepted with loyalty to Him who has sent them. A constant finding fault with the weather, or with personal inconveniences which are entailed in travelling, or in the round of household affairs, cultivates a sense of injustice and displeasure which is as fatal to one's own peace of mind as it is uncomfortable for all around us. It arises from a failure to behold God in that which comes. It is a setting up of our will and way as preferable to that of the Master. It shows a lack of faith. It makes happiness impossible. The legitimate, reasonable, righteous times for what can fairly be called complaint are so few that the rule, "Never complain," will not have many exceptions, and is well worth adopting.

4. *Be Civil but not Servile.* Or, to put it a little differently, be servant of all, servile to none. Service, helpfulness, kindliness of soul, is noble and Godlike. Servility or sycophancy is despicable and vile. Yet the two oftentimes appear considerably alike, and in avoiding the one it is easy to run into the other. Some, for fear they shall be accounted servile, are hardly civil. They overdo their independence till they fail in politeness. They believe, very rightly, that they ought to be

aggressive and positive for the right, but they do not sufficiently study to avoid being needlessly repulsive. It is possible to war, and still be winsome ; to be intense in our love to Jesus, and still maintain thoroughly cordial and sympathetic relations with those who are not His friends ; to be loyal to the truth, and yet loving to the neglecters or opponents of the truth. A delicate and difficult line of conduct is here hinted at. We must neither be indifferent to the right, nor fail in charity. We must be pure, without being Puritanic. We can have a true holiness, without letting it be turned into a sour, cold, Pharisaic severity toward the unholly, which has no very close resemblance to the Christ-like spirit of love. A very narrow margin separates good from evil in these matters. Indeed, the evil is often only an abuse or a misdirection of the good. So it requires extremely careful walking and much wisdom to order one's life in the higher ranges. Too much is as bad as too little. Blessed is he who strikes the golden mean. Christ Jesus took upon Him the form of a servant, yet bore Himself with royal dignity, and, wherever it seemed essential, asserted His righteous claims with calmest majesty. St. Paul, also, at proper times maintained his rights with a strength and courage that impressed all beholders, although it was the rule of his life to make himself servant unto all, that he might gain the more.

The combination is by no means impossible—no truckling, no grovelling, but always helping; constant courtesy, never servility.

5. *Be Childlike, but not Childish.* This is another point where discrimination is called for. There are certain traits of childhood which we are never to outgrow, however long we live, while there are other traits that we are to put away that we may become men. What are the former? Teachableness, for one thing. We should be friendly to fresh ideas, ready to take in new truth, or new forms and presentations of that which is old. We should be hungry for information, have an inquiring spirit, an open mind. For it is certain that no department of learning is yet exhausted, the Bible is not completely understood, and it is still true, as of old, that "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Trustfulness is another admirable quality of the little one, to be cherished by all and forever. There is not enough of it in the world, even with reference to man, much more with reference to God. Simplicity also should be carried over into adult years. Affection and artificiality are too much with us. Life is too crowded and complex. The fundamental things do not get room and scope enough, being crowded upon unduly by much that might well be omitted. A true simplicity is opposed both to complexity and duplicity. It means being

open, frank, sincere, devoid of pretense, having a single eye. We should remain children in these things. But children are fickle, changeable, impatient; they are ignorant and impulsive; they are tormented by foolish fears. And such traits, if they are continued too long, make people childish. In mind Paul tells us to be men, while babes in malice. There must be self-mastery, self-control, principle instead of passion, caution instead of rashness. We must not live for the day, although in one sense we may be said to live by the day. We cannot have too much knowledge, or gird up the loins of our mind too tightly to grapple with the serious problems that confront every full-grown individual. Our spiritual growth depends not a little on our mental development.

6. *Be Rightly Ambitious.* Ambition has so ill a sound from its bad connections in the past that good people are a little afraid of it; and they are thereby in danger of doing themselves a harm. A crying lack among Christians is at this very point; they are too little ambitious; they are too readily content with low things in the matter of spiritual attainment, when they ought to be intensely aspiring after that which is high. We hear them declaring their purpose to be "more faithful," as though that were very commendable, and indeed all that could reasonably be expected. They do not appear to see that that resolve

smacks strongly of disloyalty to the King, it leaves open a door to the enemy, it provides for something less than entire faithfulness, it says "some of self and some of Thee," when the language ought to be "none of self, and all of Thee." No one with deliberate intent should contemplate anything less than complete faithfulness. If there be some falling short in spite of largest endeavor, because of some weakness of the flesh, let not the spirit strike hands with such unwillingness, or admit the least compromise with the foe. The only safe way is to resolve to be the best. Only by a constant forward movement is retreat avoided. One needs to be very positive to keep out of the slough of the indolent comparative, and reach the rock of the glorious superlative. Ambition has a place in the Christian's make-up. St. Paul uses the word three times, as readers of the Revised Version will see, either in declarations concerning himself or exhortations to his followers. He employs a Greek compound which stands distinctively and unequivocally for love of fame. The three passages are 1 Thess. IV. 11, 11 Cor. V. 9, and Rom. XV. 20. In one he places a high encomium on quietness, in another on being "well pleasing unto him," in a third on the extension of the Gospel, the opening up of new regions for the reign of Jesus. Ambitions of this sort cannot be too firmly cherished, or too largely multiplied.

To be perfectly peaceful amid outward commotion because trusting so implicitly in the strong and loving Father; to be taken into close companionship with the King of kings, because doing His will without cessation; and to tell the wondrous story to those who have not yet received it, or to aid very generously those who are telling it—the more of this the better.

*7. Be Gentle Towards All.* No matter how religious people are, or how certain of their standing before God, they cannot afford to neglect the common virtues, such as gentleness, which everybody appreciates, and for lack of which many have their goodness discredited by the world. Good-manners are a part of good morals, since genuine love, when it is fully seated within, will necessarily take on courteous forms. Real kindness will find ways of kindly expression. That which comes naturally to the well-born and refined will come also in its main substance as a result of grace, as a fruit of the Spirit. Affability, graciousness, sweet reasonableness, urbanity, and readiness to accommodate, will largely characterize the true Christian. He will not be sharp and spiteful, wrathy and rude, churlish and snappish, acrimonious and exacerbating. He will be thoughtful for others, studious of that which will give pleasure, careful to avoid all needless wounding of feelings, tender in his touch, especially if he

is obliged to touch in places where pain is likely to be produced. He will not say disagreeable things if he can avoid it, not say them as if he was glad to do it, he will soften the hardness of the needful reproof with the sweetness of the love which is seen to prompt it. Perfect gentleness and meekness need not degenerate into weakness, or involve compromise with wrong. One need not be bluff and blunt, and gruff and churlish, to show his courage, or prove that he has some stamina. One need not be pliable where principle is concerned, nor yield to the pressure of temptation simply because he purposes to be always polite. Paul was a thorough gentleman, and so was his Master; he did not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, as rough handling would speedily have done. We may be like him in this, as well as in his resolute, vigorous opposition to evil.

8. *Be in Dead Earnest.* Enthusiasm is called for, and will be exhibited by those who have God in them, and are thus in God; for this is the literal meaning of the word, "in God." One may be enthusiastic without being fanatical, full of zeal without being rash, headstrong and unreasonable. If good intentions are not intense they are worth very little. A wish is by no means a will. When the mind *sets* itself on the accomplishment of the thing in hand, braces itself for high endeavor, it

will not permit itself to be frustrated by little hindrances. One secret of success is not to know when we are defeated. Men of the world often rebuke us for half-heartedness in religion, by the whole-heartedness with which they pursue their inferior objects, being wiser thus in their generation than are the children of light in theirs, as the Master said. The prophet Micah writes of the wicked men of his day, that they do evil "with both hands earnestly." It is a phrase that may well be adopted by the good, many of whom work as with but one hand, or if they take two do it listlessly. They do not take off their coat and roll up their sleeves in God's cause, as if they really meant business. It is not "one thing" with them, as it was with the apostle Paul. Few are they who learn to put first things first, and do not shilly shally, but determine to get the best at any cost. We must aim at perfection all the while, and refuse to sit satisfied with anything short of it. We may be absolutely sure that nothing pays half so well as God and the serving him with the whole heart. Let us purpose with all the strength of our being to stand perfect and complete in all His will.

9. *Learn to Pray.* The grand difficulty with very many souls, though they may not know it, is prayer. The reason why they do not go forward is because they do not really and effectively pray.

Prayer is mainly communion, a perpetual lifting of the heart to God in swift ejaculations. And this is a habit which most Christians are very slow to acquire, but which holds in itself a very large portion of concentrated happiness. It springs from and helps to a recollected spirit. Then, so far as the petitioning part of prayer goes, they are almost equally lame. They do very little genuine asking, and therefore there is very little real receiving. Their requests are routine, formal, unhelpful; they know not what to ask for, or how to ask. Certain things are essential to efficiency in this matter. We must be downright honest in our prayers, asking only for the things which, on careful examination, we are sure that we do actually want, and want so much that we are willing to pay the price for them. In many prayers there is more poetry than piety, more rhetoric than reality, more empty sound than solid satisfaction to the Lord. Praying in Christ's name means praying in His spirit or stead, as it would not be out of place for Him to ask if He were here. This means unselfishness, a pure motive, a single desire for the interests of His kingdom, not merely for the progress of some petty scheme of our own. Praying with faith means having some basis to rest our petitions upon, some promise of God expressed or clearly implied, which we can plead. It is only when we ask according to His will, that

will being ascertained by the best use of a clear understanding, that we can feel sure we are to have our requests granted. To go ahead without evidence, as fancy or desire or hope may guide, is not faith but sheer fanaticism, the effect of a disordered brain. We must put both heart and mind into our prayers, and see that they are accompanied by much work. They must in no way be associated with laziness either ethical, intellectual, or physical, or be made a substitute for labor. And the lamp of prayer will surely burn dim unless it is frequently replenished with oil.

In other words, there is the closest possible connection between devotional reading and fruitful supplication. When the mind has been sucked dry of uplifting thoughts by the multiplicity of distracting temporal interests that continually prey upon it, a fresh supply must be provided. Spiritual reading is indispensable. It acts upon the intellect, refreshes the emotions, and through them reaches the will. It has a power of suggestiveness that is invaluable. The affections are stirred. The cold heart is warmed. The laggard purpose is quickened. There is a general arousal of the whole soul. Now one can pray. He feels ashamed that he has fallen so far behind the examples of which he reads. He learns what his real needs are, and how best to meet them. Divine voices leap into his heart from off the

printed page. God speaks to him through the pens of His choicest children. Acts of faith, hope, love, and desire become easy. He takes a new start. His whole life becomes steadily transformed.

10. *Be Independent.* Our attitude toward men and their praise needs to be very closely watched. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." The love of popularity is a rock which has wrecked multitudes. Nothing is more demoralizing than a constant struggle to be in general favor. Nothing is more foolish than to put our peace of mind at the disposal of those around us, and permit them to make us miserable when they like. This is a most degrading slavery. On the other hand, he who wraps himself in a proud, haughty reserve, and makes it plain that he cares for nobody, will soon find that nobody cares for him, and that he has lost all his influence. There are two sides to the subject. But, on the whole, it seems to us that most people are so constituted that their danger is in the direction of too little independence rather than too much. Hundreds are lost, or fail to take a high stand in religion, because they feel they must go with the multitude, where tens or units err on the opposite side. We need to remember that to please men is not so important as to profit them; to please men in general is less important than to please good men; and to please men of

any kind must always be subordinate to pleasing God.

If we fear God very much we shall fear man but little. If we make Him great we shall make man small. This is the side to be cultivated by most of us. We must be ready to stand alone and count human judgment very insignificant in comparison with the divine. We must not incur the displeasure of God in the slightest degree to secure the highest rewards of men. We must say, I will be scrupulously, unalterably, universally true, and leave the result to God; I will throw prudence to the winds rather than be false in the smallest particular; I will not measure my success by the standards of the world; I will leave the shows of things, and hold to the realities; let others take the comfits and the comforts and the compliments, give me righteousness and truth.

*II. Love Everybody.* This will help ever so much in regulating our relations with those around us. If we love them we shall not be likely to hold ourselves aloof in isolation and indifference; nor shall we bend to their caprice and cater to their folly, lest we lose the incense of their flattery, or even forfeit their good will. We shall avoid all needless friction, but we shall sacrifice no grain of principle at the altar of popularity. Loving everybody does not mean that we are not to be outspoken in our condemnation of sin, hit-

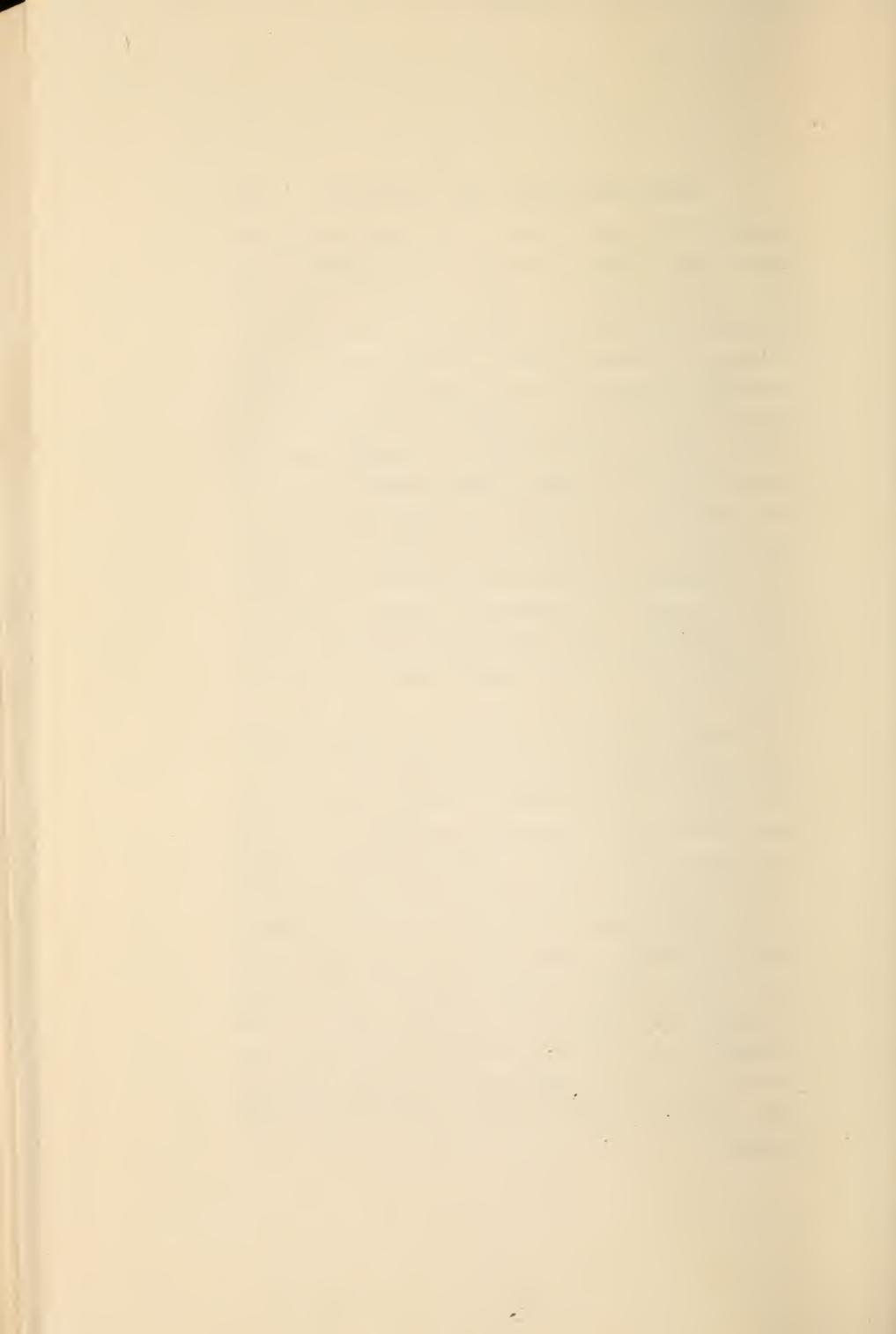
ting it no matter with whom it may be mixed up. It does not mean that we shall approve of everybody's conduct, or refrain from taking steps to oppose them and punish them if we deem them to be wrong. It does not mean that we are to love everybody in the same way or to the same extent. We shall have our favorites, even as Jesus did among His disciples. It does not mean that we shall totally forget self, in a blind, foolish enthusiasm which prompts us to part with all our goods at everybody's demand, or from a desire to relieve all the poverty we see. Christianity is not communism, nor mendicant monkery. To love everybody, even our enemies, does mean doing them good just so far as we can find or make opportunities, speaking pleasant things of and to them, and earnestly praying that they may be blest. These things we may and must do if we are to be really happy. We cannot afford, for our own sake, to do any differently. It does not pay in any sense to foster hatred, to take umbrage, or to have a grudge and a grievance. It is the worst possible investment. A very little of this sort of thing will shut God out of our hearts, strip us of usefulness, poison our life. Very pleasant is it to have the bird in the bosom sing sweetly. To love is much more than to be loved. The latter is not always within our power. But nobody can stop us from sending out constant waves

of love in all directions, and nothing will fill our souls with greater bliss, or make us more like Jesus.

12. *Take a New Start.* He who thinks he has got to a stopping place, that he is about as good as he needs to be, that he can rest on his laurels, that he knows it all, that it is of no use to try anything further, makes a fatal mistake. The only way is to keep at it, and stick to it. There is always more beyond. There is always a chance to improve, to do better in some particulars than we have ever done before, to draw a little closer to God, to increase the promptness and heartiness with which we welcome His will in hard places. It is almost always possible to find and stop certain small leaks which are drawing off our spiritual strength, and diminishing our religious resources. Our watchfulness may be increased ; we may get more out of the means of grace ; the Bible may be made to yield us larger riches ; other good books may be laid hold of to a greater extent than hitherto ; chances for profitable conversation may be more steadily improved—in short, in a dozen ways, which need not here be particularized, we may gird up our loins and get fuller returns for our time. Our progress will depend very greatly on our seizing quickly every opportunity which can be bought up, and turning it to advantage for spiritual gain. It may be a birthday, or new year, or a series of special meetings, or a great affliction

—make it the occasion for taking a new start; the oftener the better. Scarcely anybody goes along with perfect uniformity and evenness, at an unhastened, undiminished pace. It is rather a series of minor or major crises. We never get so good but what we can be better; never so fully consecrated but what, as new things as brought to our mind in the conflicts of life, we can add them to the offering. "To patient faith the prize is sure." We have need of much faith and great perseverance if we would inherit all the promises. Now is an excellent time to buckle the belt a little tighter, to put the standard up another notch, to start out afresh with new determination to obtain all that has been made possible for us in Christ Jesus.

These special advices might be almost indefinitely prolonged, for the range of such counsel is very wide. But this little book is already perhaps sufficiently large, and we think it contains the gist of the matter. Other devotional books which we have sent out, particularly "The Life of Love," "The Land of Faith," and "The Saintly Calling," develop some of these points more fully, and illustrate them in various ways. If the reader is profited by this he can procure those. We earnestly pray that he may not be a reader or hearer only, but a doer, and may enter into all the rich joys we have tried to describe in these pages.





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